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## **1. Introduction**

The situation of U.S. American higher education today has been highly debated and approached from a variety of perspectives. However, conclusions may be achievable yet remain largely ineffective. Analyses lack an interdisciplinary focus, and therefore address individual parts of the system but not the core of its problems. I want to examine pressing issues in the field by taking a cultural studies view and supporting it by sociological and educational data.

Universal access is by far the largest and most pivotal point of interest for researchers in the field as it overrides single discussions about finance and standardized testing as well as attrition rates of minority students. It is the educational equivalent of the U.S.' cultural foundation, the American Dream, which is supposed to provide equal opportunity to everyone regardless of heritage, ethnicity, race or wealth.

In my thesis, I discuss the issue of universal access by bringing together sociological empirical data and text based research from within the field of higher education. As a result, this multifaceted approach allows for a solid inquiry of the question whether universal is in fact a reality today or just a myth that is being perpetuated by those who have high stakes interest in maintaining the status quo.

## **2. Higher Education in the United States from a Cultural Studies Viewpoint**

Approaching a system as intricate and complex as higher education from one single academic angle by default leaves various dynamics unseen. Educational studies, for example, produce empirical data on student attainment and drop out rates, social characteristics and ethnic backgrounds of students and use those to reason about policy successes and failures. Those sets of data, however, can only mirror reality without providing explanations as they are quantitative

but not qualitative results. Clearly, quantitative empirical data is essential but from my perspective it can only be one of many means to identify the dynamics within a system as multifaceted as higher education.

The areas of law or finance in higher education face the same limitations as educational studies. Both are concerned with evident inequalities and current challenges within the system but approach them with a set of tools incapable of providing long-term, effective solutions. In the attempt to create a fair and equal procedure, the sequence of standardized test taking, creating application materials, applying for scholarships or federal aid et cetera has become a challenge barely manageable for students who do not have knowledgeable help. Whether it is family, a high school counsellor or a mentor, there needs to be a support system in place for students in order to be successful. It is naive yet common (Rossides 674) to believe that

[...] colleges are attended exclusively by an elite of personal merit, and that such extraneous factors as race, ethnicity, religion, or class, though perhaps influential at the lower levels of schooling, have somehow been overcome or neutralized by the time students enter college.<sup>1</sup>

Also, legal regulations such as affirmative action favour applicants from ethnic minorities but lose sight of the actual problem because “even the minorities who benefit from affirmative action are well up in the class hierarchies of their respective groups” (Rossides 674). Here is the center of the misconception: The challenge for underprivileged students does not begin at the point of entry into the higher education system but is omnipresent because socio-economic class - not ethnic membership - is the major determiner of a student’s academic career. Therefore, higher education needs fields such as law and finance to work closely with general educational studies to further broaden and expand the body of academic knowledge. They will not, however,

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<sup>1</sup> Rossides, Daniel W. “Knee-Jerk Formalism: Reforming American Education”. *The Journal of Higher Education* 75.6 (2004): 674.

be able to capture the core societal and cultural problem but merely find it mirrored in the issue of equal access to higher education.

Cultural studies can make a unique contribution due to its multidisciplinary and its inclusive methodology. A cultural studies approach brings together various academic fields in order to develop a much more sound understanding of an issue and it attempts to find its core before trying to solve it. In addition to the multiple layers of analysis, the field's theoretical nature guides thought processes beyond empirical dimensions. In my work, theoretical concepts from the field of cultural studies help identify and pinpoint circular arguments and double standards within debates in higher education. Further analysis shows that the lack of universal access is not unique to higher education but a societal phenomenon visible in many other areas and debates as well.

For my thesis, I employ various academic fields in the following capacities: chapter two introduces selected cultural studies perspectives and argues for this practice being sensible and effective for producing long term solutions. In chapter three, the development of higher education and St. Louis is traced historically. Chapter four presents sociological and educational quantitative data as the basis for the interviews conducted with a clear focus on higher education questions as well as sociological phenomena. In chapter five, then, cultural studies gain more room and theoretical concepts like class, race, ethnicity and discourse are being applied to higher education and universal access. As chapter five is almost entirely text based, it represents the methodology typical of the humanities where key texts serve as a basis for academic discourse. Overall, this thesis attempts to develop new ways of approaching the issue of universal access to higher education by combining known methods in new ways.



The theoretical framework is based on selected key concepts from the field of cultural studies, the most important one of which is class. Summarized by Chris Barker<sup>2</sup>, the category of class was initially coined by Karl Marx and referred to the binary social division created by capitalist structures in which the proletariat functions opposite of the bourgeoisie. Resulting thereof is a class struggle over power which in the end is predicted to culminate in the uprising of the working class revolting against the suppressive hierarchy lead by the capitalists. The ideal social organization according to Marxist theory is socialism in its original sense: “communal ownership, equitable distribution and ultimately the end of class division” (Barker 14).

There are still scholars<sup>3</sup> in cultural studies and other fields who apply Marxist theory directly. However, I cannot agree with authors who see this strict binary separation in Western societies today. In my view, societal structures are too multifaceted to allow for a clear cut distinction. At the same time, I concur with the notion that class divisions - yet not binary ones - exist and are “organized along capitalist lines” (Barker 14). Higher education as a part of education in general alongside “work, wages housing [...] and health” (Barker 14) is one of the areas in which the division manifests.

In my usage of the term, class is defined by socio-economic standing which is largely determined by level of education and income. Class is expressed by standard of living and social ties as well as clothing, property, choice of language and many other signifiers. As a result, I see society as being divided into many classes that may not always be clearly distinguishable descriptively. Common categorizations such as upper middle class, middle class, lower middle class and working class are only rough points of orientation and not defined by absolute standards. The differences between them and the unity among them, however, are undeniable.

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<sup>2</sup> Barker, Chris. *Cultural Studies. Theory and Practice*. Sage Publications, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed, 2008.

<sup>3</sup> For example: Ebert, Teresa L. and Masúd Zavarzadeh. *Class in Culture*. Paradigm, 2008.

A prime example of class division and its function in the United States is the phenomenon of “White Flight” which has been observed since the 1960s. I consulted the archive of *The New York Times* and found an article describing the development at a stage where the concept had not yet been coined by scholars. In this earliest text from 1972, Martin Waldron<sup>4</sup> reports on the observation that white students’ numbers drop in city public schools while they rise in the suburbs together with the numbers of white families.

The cultural context of the time is the 1954 court decision of *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* holding segregated schooling to be unconstitutional for being in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution. Immediate results of the judgement included joint schooling for all children regardless of their ethnicity as well as combined transportation to the schools. In his article, Waldron quotes a member of the Boston School Committee who attributes the phenomenon of White Flight to integrated bussing of school children caused by desegregated schooling:

No one wants to stay in the city of Boston and risk busing (sic!) their children to an integrated school, when they can move five miles outside of the city and send their kids to a nice, all-white neighbourhood school. (Waldron n.p.)

His comment explains the motivation of those white families moving from the city area into the suburbs: The intention was to separate either one’s children or one’s self from the black community and the numbers provide proof that it happened nationwide. Here are just two examples of White Flight in large cities but Waldron provides countless more in his article:

In Atlanta, whites began moving out of the city in the nineteen-fifties. This year, about 77 per cent of that city’s public school population is Negro, while many of the bedroom suburbs of Atlanta are practically all white. In New York City in 1958, some 85 per cent

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<sup>4</sup> Waldron, Martin. “White Pupils’ Rolls Drip As Families Flee the Cities.” *New York Times special*. 26 November 1972.

of the students attending academic high schools in New York were white. Last year, only 48 per cent were white. (Waldron n.p.)

White Flight, therefore, might be regarded as a mirror of ethnic divide but even at the time the article was published, researchers already realized that the phenomenon was much more than another sign of segregation. Even though the majority of those who moved were white, they were not exclusively Caucasian, so the common denominator must have been a different one:

[...] some sociologists [...] question whether racial integration in schools is really the overriding reason for population shifts in the cities. They believe that blacks as well as whites tend to move out of the inner city whenever they can afford to. (Waldron n.p.)

The question as to whether White Flight was caused solely by the decision of *Brown vs. Board of Education* is not relevant for the argument of my thesis. Key to my work is the observation that when the societal divide between black and white Americans was no longer acceptable and integration gained momentum, the divide could naturally not be momentarily healed. Indeed, it has persisted ever since. To this day, the United States are confronted with enormous challenges of racial injustice made visible in cases such as the recent arrest of Dr. Henry Louis Gates<sup>5</sup> that prompted a two week media frenzy about racial issues. For example, CNN is running a project entitled “Black in America” which addresses various kinds of problems connected to race.

As the article reports, sociologists observed then that White Flight was not exclusively white but a matter of class. So when the suburbs become whiter and the inner cities are populated with ethnic minorities, I conclude that a far greater part of minorities in the U.S. are not part of the class segments who can afford to move to the outskirts. Waldron’s article dates from 1972

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<sup>5</sup> An African-American Harvard professor who was stopped at his own doorstep for attempting to break into the house. After a brief exchange of words, the police officer arrested Gates for disorderly conduct. For more details, refer to: <http://edition.cnn.com/2009/CRIME/07/21/massachusetts.harvard.professor.arrested/index.html>

but it could serve as a fitting description of many cities' structures today. It certainly applies to St. Louis, as I will show in chapter four later on.

At this point, I summarize that desegregation may have caused - but at least has contributed to - White Flight, which is not an ethnic but a class phenomenon. The results are visible in countless U.S. cities today, one of which I will analyze closely as my case study. Society is confronted with a divide between ethnically mixed and tendentially poorer city areas and often white but in any case wealthy suburbs. The problem lies not in the divide per se but in its function:

The new suburbs create problems of racial segregation,' says the school superintendent, Thomas Goodman. 'The currently expanding new developments provide for open housings, but often the price is prohibitive and the tracts are situated so far from the job centers that the lower-income families – minority families – cannot afford to locate there. It's a real social problem. (Waldron n.p.)

Waldron's interviewee touches at the core of the problem: minorities have less access to suburb housing, not because of their skin colour, but because of their limited financial means. Today, we see many more minority families who have established themselves in the middle class, but the principle remains the same: if a family cannot afford having two cars and buying their own home, they will most likely not be able to sustain living in a suburb. That fact automatically separates high income families from the rest, and depending on the geographical location within the U.S., might also result in a racial divide.

Now that I have established the significance of the concept of class to American society in general, I would like to briefly relate it to the area of higher education. The most basic difference of the U.S. American system of higher education to the European one is that American students do not take an exam as they leave high school or their undergraduate program but they undergo standardized testing procedures in order to apply for the next academic

program. Therefore, the American system is commonly referred to as an entrance rather than an exist system. Resulting from this process is limited access to higher education that is argued to be determined by achievement on different levels depending on the program, the level of education etc.

It is my hypothesis that measures like standardized testing do not result in equal access for students but reinforce class divisions. Naturally, this is not visible from an educational studies viewpoint because scholars measure academic success as well as personal achievement and pick the best applicants to be accepted to their programs. What they cannot see and do not ask is why some students had the opportunity to develop talents, excel at athletics, travel the state with the debate team or as a cheerleader and find time to do their homework properly while maybe taking some accelerated courses that will count for “general education” credit<sup>6</sup> in college. These variables are defined by class membership and become vital at points such as college entry. Without the concept of class, these factors are not taken into account and remain unseen.

In order to analyze the issue of class, I want to introduce discourse as a key concept for my analysis and first follow Barker’s rough description: “[...] discourse constructs, defines and produces the objects of knowledge in an intelligible way while at the same time excluding other ways of reasoning as unintelligible” (Barker 20). I want to go a step further and join Foucault’s theory that “discourse regulates not only what can be said under determinate social and cultural conditions but who can speak, when and where” (Barker 20). As also elaborated in Barker, Foucault spent much of his work on researching history and power relations and came to the conclusion that power “dispersed through all levels of a social formation, power is generative, that is, productive of social relations and identities” (Barker 20).

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<sup>6</sup> In the first semester of B.A. programs, students have to earn credits from areas such as mathematics, science and the humanities regardless of their major to ensure a certain level of general education. Those courses are commonly referred to as “gen eds”, short for “general education classes”.

In other words, discourse and social reality are co-dependent entities as they define each other respectively. The way a society refers to itself and its structure is thereby a major part in how this structure is created. Applied to higher education, the concept shifts the focus away from policies like affirmative action or financial aid plans and directs it toward the discourse about equity issues. How individuals speak about access to college and most importantly how they attribute failure to get into college, should provide instructive insight into the value systems of the dominant discourse. I expect to find a double standard in the contemporary debate around universal access and to explain this circular argument creating the double standard, I introduce the final key concept and basis for U.S. American culture: the American Dream.

Parallel to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights and others, The Declaration of Independence from 1776 is one of the documents that is still defining to the nation's identity in more than just a political sense. They are believed to be present in every day life of the ordinary citizen for which they were put down in the first place. The preamble stating the ideas and morals guiding the Declaration reads in its first, most renown passage:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.<sup>7</sup>

The American Dream is now the practical application of this ideal onto the individual itself: Supposedly with hard work and dedication, a person can achieve any goal regardless of who he or she is. It is a right granted to everybody and there to be utilized by anyone who is willing to invest into it. That is said to make America the land of opportunity because it does not judge a person on anything but work ethic and outcome.

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<sup>7</sup> [http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/declaration\\_transcript.html](http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/declaration_transcript.html)

Many success stories are named along with the American Dream: Barack Obama is said to be our time's best example for a formerly young black man who made the absolute best from what he was given. For many he is a poster child for how powerful the American Dream is and stories like his reinforce the positive excitement attached to this cultural concept. Again, if class were to be taken into account, it would be clear that his middle class family background indeed puts his allegedly rough younger years in perspective. What he witnessed as a young lawyer working in the Chicago South side surely did not resemble his own experiences.

My point is that the concept of the American Dream is a coin with a problematic flipside that shows in debates about health care, for example. People who do not succeed socially or economically are blamed and made responsible for that failure as it is understood to be their fault and a result of a lack of commitment. Barker concludes the same in his analysis of *The Cosby Show*:

*The Cosby Show's* Huxtable family (along with talk show hosts such as Oprah Winfrey) represent middle-class achievement and social mobility. In line with the American Dream, they suggest that success is open to all who are talented and work for it. Consequently, African-American poverty must be at best an outcome of individual weakness [...] (Barker 214)

Rossides<sup>8</sup> makes the same point in relation to education:

And given their belief in biopsychological causation, Americans find it easy to equate the absence of formal barriers to education and the existence of free public schools with equality of opportunity. For an American, an opportunity is something one seizes or makes use of; inequality in any field is simply the record of those who did and did not have it in them to profit from opportunities available to all. (Rossides 669)

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<sup>8</sup> Rossides, Daniel W. "Knee-Jerk Formalism: Reforming American Education". *The Journal of Higher Education* 75.6 (2004): 667-703.

Public discourse in the U.S. is defined by the belief that the nonexistence of visible barriers is enough to proclaim universal access and this thesis will show that this claim is an invalid one. Barriers exist and they are as effective as open discrimination was back during segregation. In my view, the difference is that public discourse has changed and people have become unaware of the division that society is living in. As Rossides words it:

The denial that social classes exist and that they have contrary interests in education is part of the larger American denial that conflicting class interests characterize all reaches of American society.

[...] the United States has a class system strikingly similar to those of the other developed capitalist societies – all have steep and chronic inequality of wealth and income, similar social mobility rates, pronounced patterns of inherited socioeconomic status, dominance in social and political life by the upper classes, chronic labour surpluses, chronic poverty levels, and pronounced class systems of education (Rossides 669)

In chapter four of my thesis, I show that my interviewees know of these inequalities and are tremendously concerned about them. They are also aware that they represent a minority against many who either refuse to see or do not care about these social imbalances. My text analysis in chapter five will show that scholars from the area of higher education are also partly in agreement with Rossides' analysis and partly convinced that American higher education is a system defined by universal access and reflecting contemporary American society.

### **3. Locating the Case Study**

In order to understand the implications of the case study's results presented in chapter four, it is necessary to contextualize historically both the metropolitan area and the existing higher education structure of St. Louis respectively. Every university has unique historical as well as administrative significance that contribute to making my selection representative of not



only the local but the national universities. A detailed overview of these differences and common traits among the selected institutions will be given at the end of this chapter.

As higher education emerged much earlier than St. Louis was founded, I begin by providing a brief and compact overview of the history of institutionalized higher education in the United States. Here, I draw on two standard reference works as they are most frequently cited in the publications I have read. Veysey's work<sup>9</sup> is the older of the two and is based on his doctoral dissertation completed in 1961 at the University of California, Berkeley. His text focuses on the analysis of both the academic and the structural development of the American university from 1865 to 1910. Thus, it is a detailed and meticulous read that traces the stories of old, traditional universities while drawing the larger picture of how clashing approaches to academic study and organization shaped the American university during that time.

John R. Thelin's text<sup>10</sup> complements Veysey's work for my purposes, as it encompasses a larger time frame and selects historical events to pose as key examples for major developments. In his introduction, Thelin states that his "professional passion is to write history for nonhistorians" (Thelin xvi) and he indeed effectively describes a complex and complicated process by choosing vivid examples. On a factual level, Thelin's work succeeds in showing "how fragile some of our contemporary practices and assumptions are" (Thelin xvi) and thereby implicitly draws two conclusions: First, policies are always contingent on a time and place and thereby for one never definite. Second, contemporary decisions are equally temporary and in need of constant evaluation and reconsideration as they cannot claim to be more valuable than any other decision did in any other time period.

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<sup>9</sup> Veysey, L. R. *The Emergence of the American University*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1965.

<sup>10</sup> Thelin, John R. *A History of American Higher Education*. Baltimore, London: John Hopkins University Press, 2004.

As for my thesis, I attempt a brief historical overview and try to focus on the facts relevant to the five universities I have chosen for my case study. The excursion into the history of St. Louis city is equally compact as its only purpose is to prepare the ground for combining the historical elements at the end of this chapter. There, I briefly discuss the five universities to show that they are representative of the spectrum of higher education institutions and mirror national issues of higher education today.

### **3.1. The Development of Colleges and Universities**

The first universities date back into the colonial period and have acquired nearly cult-like status over the last two centuries. Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Columbia and Rutgers, just to name some of the most renowned ones, enjoy much of their prestige today largely because they have acquired an emotional value attached to the colonial period: “Red brick Georgian buildings with slate roofs, white trim, and mullioned windows, clustered around a green, provided an academic archetype indelibly linked with a real and imagined colonial past” (Thelin 1). This had not always been the case. Colleges and universities “rediscovered and then asserted this legacy” (Thelin 1) around 1900 which lead to “standards of academic honor and imitation” (Thelin 5).

This outward orientation of American universities toward England’s admired universities was reflected in an academic and structural attention toward the old continent and its traditions. Colleges at the time were “associated with their having transplanted the Oxford-Cambridge ideas to America” (Thelin 7) and with that came the system of “mixing living and learning [that] was at the heart of the Oxford and Cambridge pedagogy” (Thelin 8). However intense the efforts to create a replica of the English model, the American institutions did not succeed, neither

administratively nor otherwise, for both lack of money and a difference in understanding about governance.

Another characteristic that defined the colonial American university was its corporate nature. When early college founders looked to Oxford and Cambridge for effective ways to govern a university, they were appalled by “the sloth and autonomy of the Oxford scholars” (Thelin 11). As a result, they found guidance in the Scottish model which did not base its administrative control on faculty but an external board. The long lasting effect at American universities is still visible today:

This provision for ultimate control by an external board built in a mechanism for continual accountability. Equally important was the board’s vesting the office of the college president with administrative authority. (Thelin 11)

So in radical difference to the British universities where departments governed themselves mostly by choosing a faculty representative, the American university was barely beginning to develop and already it was a corporate entity, with all its benefits and flaws.

As described in Thelin’s work, colonial colleges were funded by tuition payments of their students as well as government funding. Resources were scarce, however, and colleges depended on donations which established the idea of accountability early on. To this day, both alumni and corporations donate to institutions and often times those donations receive grateful recognition: Webster University’s library carries the name of their most financially potent investor Emerson, just to give one example. Seminar rooms, rehearsal halls, performance centers or even park areas on campuses are named according to the entity whose contribution made it possible.

This need to raise funds has taught universities and especially their presidents to market themselves accordingly. Thelin makes it clear that the colleges “owed their survival to their

tireless fund-raising efforts” (Thelin 18). Equally, their success lay in “working hard at keeping tuition low and [...] using financial aid to recruit applicants” (Thelin 18).

Recruiting suitable students was a true challenge at the time. There was no dependable system of schooling before higher education, so the entrance examinations were bendable:

Sometimes the colleges simply allowed boys to matriculate, often as young as fourteen or fifteen years old. Most of the colonial colleges [...] provided preparatory and elementary instruction as a way of gaining revenues and cultivating future student cohorts. (Thelin 18)

In terms of student population, colonial and contemporary colleges face both similarities and differences. As is the case today, higher education was available through scholarships for the poor if they were capable and had a chance to showcase their ability (Thelin 18). The social composition of universities, however, did not represent America as it logically should have if all capable minds would have had access to universities. Colleges were a reflection and “clear reminders of social class” (Thelin 23) as Thelin describes vividly in one of his countless examples:

College rolls listed students not alphabetically but by family rank. And, following the Oxford tradition, academic robes identified socioeconomic position. “Commoners” – literally, those students who dined in the commons – wore long robes, as distinguished from the short academic robes of “servitors”, scholarship students who waited on tables. Little wonder, then, that the College of Rhode Island was considered a bit radical in 1769 when broadside for its commencement exercises bore the headline, “Nomine alphabetice disposita sunt.” Although the college had retained the curricular elitism of Latin, it had made a concession to democracy by publishing the names of its graduating students in alphabetical order. (Thelin 23)

When speaking about the colonial college student, the referenced percentage is probably around one percent of the population (Thelin 24). So the group of individuals was for its greater part privileged in terms of wealth and class. By the mid-eighteenth century, the colonies in the

East had become wealthier and studying at college brought with it solid upper class standing.

Thelin describes the effect of class pointedly:

Class distinctions within the colony were sharp, and the colleges became increasingly distant from the world and experience of most American families. Clearly, a main purpose of the colleges was to identify and ratify a colonial elite. (Thelin 25)

He cites Jackson Turner Main<sup>11</sup> to further support his argument:

The college was a conservative institution that was essential to transmitting a relatively fixed social order (Thelin 25).

Based on Thelin's analysis and my own research, I hypothesize that college education fulfilled and still fulfills two societal functions: qualification and enculturation. I define the former as the transfer of content knowledge to the student in order to grant licensure or professional degrees. Every area of academic study teaches skills that are directly applicable in the field and necessary in order to be professionally successful.

The concept of enculturation encompasses all other elements provided by university education which are not included in qualification: general education, social skills, networking, et cetera. Those function as "transmitter of social lessons" (Thelin 25) and support college's purpose which is and was to prepare young adults for roles "of leadership and service" (Thelin 26). Expert interviews in chapter four include a question about the purpose of a Bachelor degree and the analysis shows that leadership and service to the community and society are as essential to educators today as they were in colonial days.

Also covered in the interviews is the question of why people want to obtain a Bachelor degree. Answers vary from utilitarian views to opinions summarized under enculturation. Thelin

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<sup>11</sup> Jackson Turner Main, *The Social Structure of Revolutionary America*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1965.

states that “a bachelor’s degree was hardly a prerequisite for most professional pursuits” (Thelin 99) so the reason to still pursue one is explained by it moving a step upward the social and economic ladder. I claim that in many fields and with many students, that is still the case today.

Thelin supports this conclusion:

The challenge for college presidents was to convince American families that an undergraduate education was worthwhile and affordable while maintaining the college’s essential commitment to education for character. This commitment by the college and investment by a student’s family would be a passport into a professional group, an American middle class. (Thelin 108)

A reliable source for researching the purpose of education in any historical period is the curriculum as it is per definition the gist of what educators and society feel necessary and worth teaching. When examining the curriculum of colonial times, both functions become visible:

A college education with its emphasis on informed argumentation, classical languages, and political economy supplemented the landed entry’s ethos with a political and intellectual awareness largely absent from the previous generation. (Thelin 36)

So the future colonial elite was measured according to their knowledge of “ancient authors and levels of mathematics” (Thelin 18) and their ability “to study biblical texts, solve mathematical problems, or conjugate Latin verbs” (Thelin 19). If the purpose of an undergraduate degree had been purely utilitarian, those curriculum contents would not have been included. Hence, both functions are represented in the curriculum and were also stated implicitly in an official report:

The typical curriculum was that described in the influential Yale Report of 1828: a bachelor of arts curriculum that emphasized the study of classical languages, science, and mathematics with the aim of building character and promoting distinctive habits of thought. (Thelin 64)

As future land owners, traders or politicians, it appears logical to know mathematics and rhetoric, but ancient authors and the conjugation of Latin verbs only helps at the periphery. Those areas are part of general education of this social class and needed to sustain membership. They were requirements of the middle and upper class and as such they were enculturated in college.

The same procedure holds true when examining any Bachelor degree requirements today. They include general education and depending on the school and the field, also plenty of non-specified electives. Students are encouraged to take courses outside their specialization because the expectation is to broaden the knowledge at that point of their academic studies. The same argument applies to the reason for why students have much higher chances of getting accepted to better colleges if they can provide a record of extra-curricular involvement and community work: the Bachelor degree's purpose is to educate the young adult in a broad, whole and humanist way to form a well-rounded, valuable member of society (Dr. D. 2).<sup>12</sup>

The distinction between enculturation and qualification in connection with higher education is necessary and valid as it allows for a much clearer analysis with respect to the nature of the three major degrees – Bachelor, Master, Doctor of Philosophy – on the one hand. On the other hand, it is essential for turning the educational perspective into a cultural studies view when analyzing the relevance of class in higher education.

Historically, the concepts prove helpful in documenting the minor changes between the colonial university and today's institutions with regard to structure. By the turn of the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, the basic foundation for the American university was laid and in retrospect, the development continued in a rather foreseeable way:

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<sup>12</sup> Expert interview coding, see Table 12 in chapter 3.

In addition to the expansion of college foundings, the period saw the creation of other diverse kinds of institutions offering formal programs: universities, academies, seminaries, scientific schools, normal schools and institutes. [...] Institutions whose purpose was to enroll previously excluded groups – women, blacks, and Roman Catholics, for example – surfaced on the higher education landscape in the first half of the nineteenth century. (Thelin 42)

Geographically, the development followed the founding of the colonies and the states from the East to the West. The stages of these historical changes manifested in certain areas more than in others. For example, institutions in the Midwest remained largely affiliated to religious founders such as the Presbyterians and the Congregationalists. Women's colleges were prominent in the same area and the earliest examples are found in Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin and Ohio with three colleges each (Thelin 55). Webster University with its mother campus in St. Louis, Missouri, is one of the original women's colleges that later turned into a mixed college but maintained its comparatively small size and liberal arts focus. Institutions in New England built on their liberal arts tradition often in combination with religious prominence. The South created its academic identity through the focus on "state universities [that] were exclusive and expensive" (Thelin 69).

However different in nature, certain structural elements united colleges and universities in the mid-nineteenth century: Their mostly modest size led to the "promotion of cohesion through membership [to] academic class: freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors" (Thelin 66). Much stronger yet were social groupings and "prestigious groups, whether literary societies or Greek-letter fraternities" (Thelin 67). Outsiders played a subordinate role and organized themselves in separate clubs.

Two major historical events defined the country and higher education: The Civil War (1861 – 1865) and the 1862 Morrill Land Grant Act. The former resulted in a major halt with



regard to instruction especially in the South as people were involved in the war and therefore physically, financially or otherwise unable to care about higher education. The Land Grant Act, on the other hand, was one essential cornerstone for public higher education as we know it today.

Even though there had been other legislature before literally giving land for support, the Morrill Act was unique as it required colleges to dedicate revenues from Western lands to “establishing collegiate programs in such ‘useful arts’ as agriculture, mechanics, mining, and military instruction” (Thelin 76). Again, higher education became tied to federal regulation partly also in terms of the utilitarian curriculum. The state did not directly dictate the content of instruction but ordered a general liberal arts direction (Thelin 77).

The beginning of the twentieth century was marked by immense growth in academia. Contributing factors were the thriving industry as well as religious affiliation that in turn brought generous investments by successful industrialists such as John D. Rockefeller or Benjamin Duke (Thelin 113). At the same time, the university shaped into much of the form it is in today. Aspects such as the role of the president as marketer and fund raiser and the “conception of academic professionalism” (Thelin 128) became dominant. The distinction among faculty into “instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, and full professor” (Thelin 128) developed together with the system of tenure tracks.

Another new cultural trend was the fact that “college-going became fashionable and prestigious” (Thelin 156) and so did undergraduate college life. There were magazines, a new field of literature emerged and for the institutions the time came with a massive focus on marketing: “institutional colors and mascots” (Thelin 159), “alma maters and college hymns” (Thelin 161) as well as events like homecoming or special sports competitions drew interest. However:

The American celebration of the ‘collegiate ideal’ was much more than a mere popular fascination with campus life; it was a matter of serious social implications. (Thelin 168)

Considering that not even five percent of young male adults went to college at the time and taking into account that “tuition and official charges were not outlandish” (Thelin 169), it is surprising to see such a selected number of individuals at university around 1920. With the concept of enculturation at hand, it is simple to reason that even though higher education would have been possible for “some ambitious, hardworking students from modest backgrounds, access was primarily open to a growing middle and upper-middle class of young white men” (Thelin 171).

The beginning of the twentieth century provided the American university with enough applicants and therefore, “some colleges ultimately had the luxury of choice in using selective admissions to determine the size and social composition of the student body” (Thelin 196). No longer was social selection a matter of campus club membership but it was decided at the admissions office. Already in the 1920s, this approach led to a discussion of whether or not to pursue limitation of students starting freshmen year in order to create “the highest culture”.<sup>13</sup>

The advantages for the colleges were intriguing: better educated students, the opportunity to select future members and donators, the control over social homogeneity. The downsides were mostly felt by the students. As academic records became important, the issue of access was now moved to the level of secondary education. That area was severely underdeveloped at the time and so the new system resulted in a division:

Unfortunately, there is no compelling evidence that selective procedures always rewarded talent. Often as not, the selective-admissions machinery was used to increase the social

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<sup>13</sup> Cornelius Howard Patton and Walter Taylor Field, *Eight o’Clock Chapel: A Study of New England College Life in the Eighties*. Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1927: p. 332 quoted in Thelin, p. 197

homogeneity of a campus by rejecting applicants from religious and ethnic minority groups. (Thelin 197)

As the high school structure strengthened, academic records gained relevance and even at the time the question about the purpose of selective admissions arose: “Was it to raise academic standards by identifying talent? Or, rather, was it to use testing as a transparent social screening mechanism whose ultimate accomplishment was to reduce the friction caused by diversity in the student body?” (Thelin 198). General and specifically contemporary aspects on this core issue of access to higher education are taken up in chapter five of this thesis.

By the end of World War I, student numbers had recovered and the secondary sector was strong enough to enable higher education enrollment to “increase more than fivefold, from 250,000 to 1.3 million” (Thelin 205). Universities expanded, both in terms of their students as well as their campuses, and with the foundation of UCLA<sup>14</sup> the multicampus system had been born.

With the large number of students came problem of quality education and guidance. Academic advising, for example, was equally bothersome for students and professors. Therefore, “the dropout rate, especially at state universities, was high” (Thelin 221). In terms of dedication to academic study, the university developed by maintaining the undergraduate student body base while also offering Master and Doctoral degrees. Only a small number of students chose that path at the time, but the foundation for the general structure of Bachelor, Master and Doctorate was already in place in the first half of the twentieth century.

The immense growth in higher education led to an explosion in tuition costs that were now even sharper depending on location: “By the mid-1930s the prestigious institutions in the Northeast charged about twice as much as established private universities in the Midwest”

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<sup>14</sup> The Los Angeles branch of the public University of California.

(Thelin 251). Additionally, college graduates faced unemployment or far too low pay due to the desperate national economic situation. Nonetheless, “younger generations of high school graduates continued to [...] enroll in college in record numbers” (Thelin 253) also because of need based financial aid. It was, however, met with reluctance. The common assumption was “that paying for college education was a burden for the student and family, not the institution, to bear.” (Thelin 254). On the brink of mass education, university was still “a privilege rather than a right” (Thelin 254).

However liberal college life was perceived to be, it was conservative in the sense that it “sealed once and for all the popular belief that ‘going to college’ was a rite of passage into the prestige of the American upper-middle class” (Thelin 254). The majority of jobs then did not require a college degree, yet “the mere social prestige of being a college alumnus conferred leverage in the job market” (Thelin 254).

World War II required a close relationship of the federal government with higher education as research for the war was carried out by the large universities. This development continued into the after-war period with the implementation of the GI-Bill of 1944, granting educational benefits to war veterans. There was no limitation in terms of number or institution so soldiers could carry their benefits with them. As a result, the American campus became much more male dominated and led to a drop in female student numbers. With the student body being much more diverse, standardized testing became more relevant for many soldiers did not have traditional academic credentials. During that time, black veterans were granted the same rights at a time where open discrimination was still a standard practice nationwide.

Thelin refers to the years after World War II as the golden years because enrollment numbers continued to increase and “economic prosperity, educational aspiration and a

demographic boom” (Thelin 298) made college a success. Due to the growing numbers, standardized testing had become a common procedure with “multiple influences on American life (Thelin 302). Both the SAT<sup>15</sup> and the ACT<sup>16</sup> were used and received criticism for their usage as assessment tool to predict future college success. The tests were also charged with being discriminative of students of lower economic status and with less educational preparation. This debate with all its cultural implications is still going on today, and I discuss it in detail in chapter five.

Higher education seemed to be on the rise in the 1970s and yet “the higher-education community had very little systematic information about itself” (Thelin 318). Institutions were experiencing severe financial trouble and spread themselves too thinly “in an attempt to be all things to all constituencies” (Thelin 319). The Newman Report presented in 1971 drew a dark picture for the future of higher education. It demanded a change in institutions’ “disturbing trends toward uniformity [...] and there was a strong urge to address issues of “equality for women, [...] minority access, and [...] diverse structures and funding mechanisms”.<sup>17</sup>

Mass education had caused college to be “reasonable, accessible and affordable to virtually any American who sought formal instruction beyond high school” (Thelin 322) but with this development came a “trend toward consumerism” (Thelin 322). Universities stood in stiff competition with each other over future students and donors as well as federal financial assistance (Thelin 322). For students, this meant great freedom of choice.

As for the financial part of college, the introduction of the Pell Grant was the first part of two that changed the system of paying for higher education to what we know today. It was

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<sup>15</sup> SAT Reasoning Test, formerly called Scholastic Assessment Test.

<sup>16</sup> American College Test.

<sup>17</sup> Frank Newman et al., *Report on Higher Education*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, March 1971: p. vii quoted in Thelin, p.320.

guaranteed that “any applicant who complied with its terms” (Thelin 324) would receive financial aid provided a full-time student status and proper academic success. Like the GI bill, these grants could be taken to any institution. Universities had even more incentive to recruit students and the program was a tremendous success in the mid-1970s. The second part of the change was introduced in 1978 when the Guaranteed Student Loan Act was passed (Thelin 326). It shifted the focus of financial aid from grants to loans which appealed to banks as well as students from the upper classes. The troublesome long term result still visible today was an enormous amount of debt for many if not the majority of students at college.

As for minority enrollments, the positive change toward higher numbers began to show in the 1980s. The awareness about racial and ethnic diversity developed even without legal or policy guidance other than Affirmative Action. This lack of guidance showed in academic areas and created harsh debates about what should be taught and why. The Humanities experienced a crisis at this time of utilitarian and consumer approaches to higher education. To this day, this debate continues.

Colleges and universities in the 21<sup>st</sup> century should, according to Thelin, “rediscover essential principles and values that have perhaps been obscured” (Thelin 362) by ideological fights over curricula and organization or finance. Higher education will have to accept its history and use it to move forward with all “the responsibilities that accompany that maturity” (Thelin 362).

This concise overview of the development of U.S. American higher education helps put contemporary issues discussed in chapter five in perspective and supports my claim that the problems of today are in fact systemic ones rooted deep in cultural convictions. Throughout history, higher education has been a partial reflection of current societal developments and

therefore, contemporary concerns need to be addressed from an inclusive perspective rather than from just one academic area.

### **3.2. St. Louis' City History**

The following brief overview of St. Louis' historical and geographical significance to my case study is based on the *Insiders' Guide to St. Louis*<sup>18</sup> as well as my own knowledge and experience living there. For this thesis, it is important to create a rough timeline of the city in which the case study is located to understand what the environment was like when the universities were built.

The settlement of St. Louis was founded by Pierre Laclede when he traveled on the Mississippi and “liked the area’s river access and the bluff that would prevent flooding” (Massey 10). In his 1763 journal entry, Laclede wrote that he thought St. Louis “might become hereafter one of the finest cities in America” (Massey 10). As soon as the French began developing trade and using the Mississippi as transportation route the city was on its way to great prosperity. By 1849, Massey reports, it “was a major trading city” (Massey 11), but the same year a fire caused by a ship accident annihilated vast parts of the city. With “only the Old Courthouse and the Old Cathedral” (Massey 11) left standing, the town set out to rebuild itself using mostly brick and iron instead of wood. Today, the downtown area is still characterized by small, brick houses and the massive steel bridge that remind St. Louisians of the tragic event.

In 1847, a time when slavery was a common practice in Missouri, Drew and Harriet Scott tried suing their owner for freedom after they had fled into a Union state. After ten years of court procedures, “a final ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court [...] declared that slaves were not citizens

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<sup>18</sup> Massey, Dawne. *Insiders' guide. St. Louis*. Conneticut: Globe Pequot Press, 2004.

and thus had no rights under the law” (Massey 12). This decision did not only divide the city but the nation and contributed to the tensions that led to the Civil War in 1861.

One of the strongest economic foundations was laid in 1860 when a small brewery opened under the name Anheuser-Busch. The family business has been handed down and the brewery is still one of the largest employers to the citizens and donors to the town. The baseball stadium of the thriving local baseball team “Cardinals” is only one icon of their ongoing success.

Culturally, the St. Louis Fair of 1904 marked an important point as it celebrated the Louisiana Purchase of 1804, the year in which French territory was bought by the United States. Aside from the economic boost and national attention, St. Louis also gained “75 miles of roads and walkways and 15 miles of railroad [...] and built more than 1,000 buildings that occupied the fairgrounds in what is now Forest Park” (Massey 12). The area in midtown St. Louis is still the largest park in the city and it encompasses the St. Louis Zoo, museums, restaurants and plenty of green spaces. Adjacent to it is the private Washington University and the prestigious district Central West End with the also private St. Louis University.

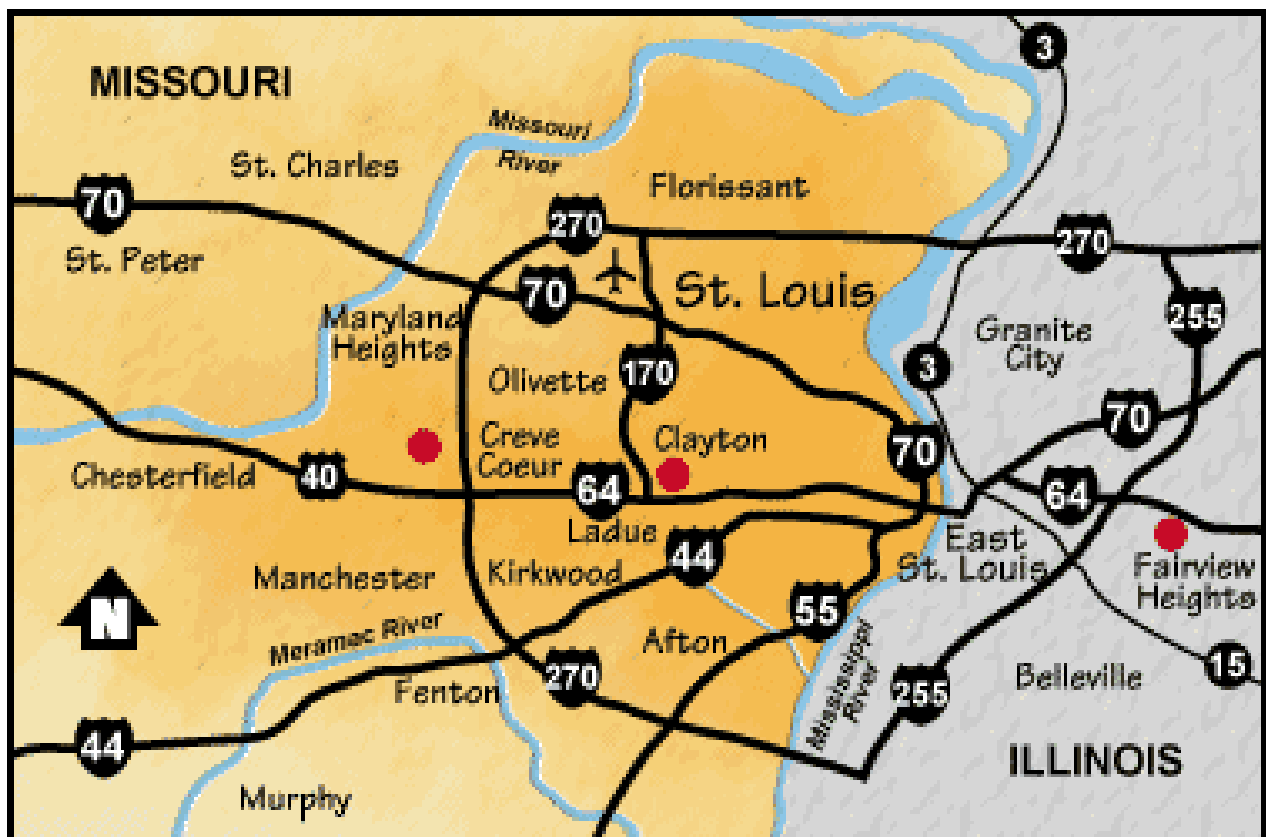
The completion of the Gateway Arch on the Mississippi riverfront in 1965 stimulated the city’s downtown area as well as it prompted the construction of a the Convention Center, Union Station and the largest shopping mall in St. Louis City, the St. Louis Center (Massey 16). Not even the devastating flood of 1993 could stall the growth of the city of St. Louis that is still continuing.

Today, the city presents itself as the cultural capital of the Midwest second only to Chicago. Its musical heritage is being maintained: Jazz music flourishes alongside contemporary styles. Regardless of its small size, St. Louis entertains various art events throughout the year. It



Geographically, historical development of St. Louis is manifested in its structure. A schematic map below visualizes the circular shape of the city and its division into the Missouri and the Illinois part.

**Figure 1**  
**Map of the St. Louis Metropolitan Area<sup>19</sup>**



19

http://images.search.yahoo.com/images/view?back=http%3A%2F%2Fimages.search.yahoo.com%2Fsearch%2Fimages%3Fp%3Ddst.%2Bblouis%2Bmetropolitan%2Barea%26b%3D21%26ni%3D20%26ei%3DUTF-8%26pstart%3D1%26fr%3Dyfp-t-150&w=377&h=249&imgurl=www.dick-blick.com%2Fmissouri%2Fstlouis.gif&rurl=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.dickblick.com%2Fstores%2Fmissouri%2Fcrevecoeur&size=26k&name=stlouis+gif&p=st.+louis+metropolitan+area&oid=f631d7d0eb705f2a&fr2=&no=35&tt=685&b=21&ni=20&sigr=11jo5d01m&sigi=117jhjo2d&sigb=13kkclj11

Downtown is located at the state boarder where Highway 70 crosses over the Mississippi. With the distance from the city center, the prestige of the districts increases: property prices and school ratings are highest in Clayton, Ladue, Creve Coeur. These are also the areas with mid-size, high value apartment complexes, town houses and the business quarter with the most expensive stores and restaurants. Further out in Chesterfield, Manchester and Florissant, property prices are moderate for full houses yet still above average for apartment housing. Numerous parks and open spaces, sports clubs and large health care facilities are characteristic for those areas.

Low-income families are mostly found directly downtown or in Northern St. Louis located between Highway 70 and 270 as well as in South St. Louis reaching from downtown to Highway 55 up to the river. Olivette and its extension up to the Lambert Airport are poverty stricken as well and show a high crime rate as do the other poor parts of town. Those city divisions are evident, and I give more detailed proof in chapter four. With regard to the student population of the selected university, it is important to be aware of the city structure to understand the implications of each institution's location.

### **3.3. Local University Profiles**

The five universities I have selected for the empirical study presented in chapter four are the largest and most comprehensive in St. Louis. There are multiple other institutions that offer specialized programs, but I have disregarded them for following a too narrow academic focus. The ones I have chosen represent both the private and the public sector as well as research and teaching universities.

In order to give a brief comparison of the institutions, I consulted the National Center for Education Statistics' (NCES) databases and collected basic data and information about the colleges. Table 1 below identifies only one institution as publically funded and together with the private St. Louis University, it is one of the largest in the area.

**Table 1**  
**Overview of selected institutions<sup>20</sup>**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Total enrollment</b>	<b>Undergraduate enrollment</b>	<b>Percentage of undergraduate enrollment</b>
<b>Maryville University</b>	private	3,422	2,801	81.85
<b>Webster University</b>	private	19,398 (8,011)	3,974 (3,585)	20.49 (44.75)
<b>Missouri Baptist University</b>	private	4,598	3,406	74.08
<b>St. Louis University</b>	private	15,539	10,798	69.49
<b>Washington University in St. Louis</b>	private	13,382	7,253	54.20
<b>University of Missouri - St. Louis</b>	public	15,527	12,432	80.07

Webster University's total enrollment number published by the NCES is not representative in direct comparison with the other universities as it includes all students world wide and not only those from St. Louis. According to the college's own publication dated July 2009,<sup>21</sup> the total enrollment number for the St. Louis campuses comes to 8,011 with 3,585 students taking undergraduate education. Hence, the undergraduate population makes 44.75 percent of the total student number at Webster University in St. Louis.

<sup>20</sup> <http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>

<sup>21</sup> [http://www.webster.edu/shared/shared\\_aboutwebster/factsheet.pdf](http://www.webster.edu/shared/shared_aboutwebster/factsheet.pdf)

The enrollment numbers testify to the fact that the two largest universities in terms of student numbers are on the opposite ends of the spectrum with regard to undergraduate education. As a public institution, the University of Missouri in St. Louis, commonly abbreviated UMSL, is the place to go to for students who do not have the financial means or the grades to attend a prestigious private school like Washington University or St. Louis University.

The undergraduate enrollment numbers also show the financial potential of these institutions. Since undergraduates provide the fiscal basis especially for private universities, it is significant that St. Louis University, Washington University and Webster University have the lowest percentages in undergraduate enrollment. It can be inferred that these institutions draw large amounts of endowments and funding from their alumni as well as from their sponsors.

With regard to the institutions' histories, it is important to consider their heritage that led to their foundation in religious belief systems. Webster and Maryville both share a rough timeline of their foundation and founders. According to the information published on their homepages,<sup>22</sup> the former was founded in 1915 by the Catholic Sisters of Loretto whose goal was to make higher education available for those who at the time had no access to it. One of the main buildings and the former dorm hall is named Loretto Hall and honors this history. Webster University was the first women's college until it subscribed to coeducation in 1962.

Maryville University was founded much earlier, in 1872, by the Religious of the Sacred Hearts, a female Catholic organization. It was also a college exclusively for women located in South St. Louis until it expanded in 1923 and finally relocated to West County in 1961. The college became coeducational in the same year as Webster University.

Much older than the small liberal arts colleges discussed above are the large research universities of the area. St. Louis University is the oldest among them having been founded in

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<sup>22</sup> <http://www.maryville.edu/about-president-heritage.htm> and <http://www.webster.edu/about/history.shtml>

1826 when the Jesuits took over St. Louis College and developed it into a full university. It received its charter in 1832 and thereby was the second Jesuit institution of higher education after Georgetown. The school still follows the Jesuit tradition and takes pride in a sharp distinction of itself from Catholic teachings. The religious viewpoint has been defining at St. Louis University enough to cause the Medical School to split and join Washington University in 1855.

According to their published information on the World Wide Web, St. Louis University took a leadership role in educating the first five African American students in 1944 and hosting female students in the law department starting in 1949. There is no mention of whether these students finished their studies to graduation. What makes St. Louis University unique is, among other factors, the fact that even though it is religiously based, the institution is governed by a majority of lay people serving on the board and other significant positions.

Washington University is the second largest traditional, religiously affiliated university in town and probably naturally, there are some friendly rivalries with the students and faculty of St. Louis University. It opened its doors in 1853, roughly 30 years after St. Louis University, under the name “Eliot Seminary”. Soon, the name was changed and the phrase “in St. Louis” was added to avoid confusion with the various other institutions carrying the same name. This and other information is provided on their homepage, together with a section on the school’s efforts during desegregation. According to its own publication, the Medical School and the School of Social Work welcomed black students as early as 1947. The other departments followed suit until the athletics program and the residence administration made the university a fully desegregated one in 1953 and 1954 respectively.

Besides all their ideological and institutional differences, there are characteristics that both, St. Louis University and Washington University, share. Among them are their campuses that resemble 19<sup>th</sup>-century architecture and impress with seemingly ancient building decorations, inside and out. Narrow hallways and old, wooden interiors mark most of the administrative buildings and partly also the academic ones. There, modern equipment and contemporary class arrangements succeed in creating a comfortable and effective learning environment.

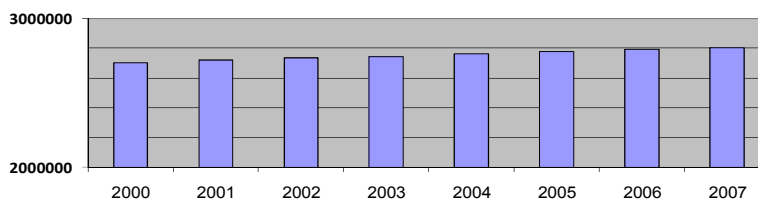
Unfortunately, that is not true for the public UMSL located near the airport in a former business park. Modern, flat buildings and equally unattractive classrooms create a much less warm and welcoming environment than at the private institutions. The St. Louis campus is one of four that make up the University of Missouri. Founded in 1839 by the inhabitants of a village, the school was fully integrated by 1950 and had expanded to its four campus structure by 1962. Even though the university is a leader in many areas, the appeal of its environment lacks aspects that the other schools are able to provide for their students.

There are countless other characteristics that distinguish and unite the institutions. For my inquiry, it is enough to show that they represent different kinds of universities that exist in the United States nationwide. Hence, the conclusions I have drawn from my empirical analysis and recent publications in the field will apply to higher education in the United States in general. Even though no case study is able to capture the complexity and variety of the nationwide structure, it gives insight into the basic, systemic issues of higher education.

#### 4. A Case Study of Present Day St. Louis

Due to the great variety within the higher education system, it is necessary to focus my empirical inquiry in order to produce significant conclusions. I have chosen St. Louis because I lived and worked there for the greater part of three years. During that time, I was able to gain insights into the city's culture, its universities and their structure as well as its social composition.

Table 2: St. Louis population 2000 - 2007



Source: Annual Estimates of the Population of Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2007 (CBSA-EST2007-01). U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division.

As the annual population estimates in Table 1 make clear, St. Louis has not experienced any significant changes in its population data in the period shown. The fluctuation between the years 2000 and 2007 comes to about 100,000 residents and therefore credits all following data taken from the American Community Survey of 2005-2007 as representative of the last decade and today. As the slight growth of population has remained consistent over the past decade, a similar development can be expected for the year 2008 and following. Similar to the last years, population will not change significantly and therefore does not change the 2005 to 2007 data's relevance for today. Hence, conclusions based on all following data remain viable.

To visualize how the demographic situation of St. Louis shapes local higher education and its institutions, Table 3 below shows the area’s population data and the major differences in numbers and ethnicities between the downtown area and the suburbs.

**Table 3**  
**St. Louis population data**

	<b>City</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Combined</b>
<b>Total</b>	352,389	998,368	1,350,757
<b>White</b>	161,917	733,156	895,073
<b>Black</b>	173,490	212,683	386,173
<b>Percentage of black residents</b>	49.23%	21.30%	28.59%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2005-2007 American Community Survey.

The population data of St. Louis (U.S. Census Bureau) presented in Table 3 above shows significant variation depending on location. The city, which encompasses only the downtown area, counts a little over 350,000 residents, with an almost equal distribution among the white and black or African American population. St. Louis County, on the other hand, with almost a million residents is populated mostly by white people and leaves only 21.3% black residents.

Part of the reason for this imbalance is the property tax distribution system as summarized by Kruckemeyer et al. (2008). The percentage of property tax revenue directed toward public school funding is regulated by state law which governs decisions of local governments. In Missouri, property tax “has remained relatively stable over the last thirty years” (Kruckemeyer et al. 6) and each county spends its resources slightly differently. Statewide, 44% of property tax revenue is spent on K-12 public education according to Kruckemeyer et al (2008) whereas almost 80% of available funding for local schools comes from property tax. Additionally, the authors state that



state funding for local school districts has become limited due to the state budget crisis, Missouri's schools have become increasingly dependent on the local property tax to meet their budgetary needs. (Kruckemeyer et al. 4)

In Daphne Kenyon's Policy Focus Report (2007), property taxation is linked to issues of school funding and summarized different views on the issue. One concern of supporters of the current system is to maintain "local autonomy and local involvement" by giving "homevoters [...] an incentive to carefully evaluate local school spending proposals". (Kenyon 6) Immediately following this statement, however, a different position is being pinpointed that I share and believe being central:

Another key link between the property tax and school funding is the disparity in per-pupil property wealth among school districts, and the possibility that disparities could lead to inequities [...]. For example, children in property-rich districts may have access to better education than children in property-poor districts. (Kenyon 6)

While it seems reasonable for a community to finance their children's education by contributing directly to the infrastructure that provides it, there are two problematic consequences that lead to major social injustices.

The first direct result that also Kenyon addresses is the gap in educational quality between wealthy and less wealthy neighborhoods. Many factors depend on financing: Teachers' salaries, classroom equipment, course offerings, field trips, extra-curricular activities, the school building and surrounding play or sports areas depend on the financial resources of the people who live in the same community. In St. Louis, the effect is glaringly obvious: Schools "located in the upscale suburbs of Clayton and Ladue, respectively, are well respected academically [...]" (Massey 204). Downtown schools, in comparison, cannot offer many of the above privileges, but instead face realities of student violence, gang and drug related crime as well as generational poverty that affect their students.

Second, St. Louis residents react to these dynamics by trying to move into areas where they are able to secure a well rounded education for their children. Due to the above described tax policy, the county rather than urban districts have become the center of attention for families with children. As a direct result, house and property prices have gone up continually which leave the less wealthy with two options: significant debt or bad quality of living and education.

As discussed in previous chapters, the phenomenon has been described as White Flight<sup>23</sup> and it resulted in the multi-faceted separation that is visible today. Key to this issue is the observation that socio-economic division seems to be paralleled by racial divide. In St. Louis, the divide concerns the white and black segments of the city's population.

So far, demographic data show that black residents cluster in the downtown area where the standard of living is significantly lower than in the suburbs which are mostly populated by white people. With the property tax distribution system taken into account, it becomes clear that the racial divide is in accordance with the divide between wealthy and less wealthy citizens. So for the majority of the residents, it still is the case that being black increases one's chances of living in less developed, underprivileged and poorer parts of town.

On the basis of these conclusions, I developed my research question for the empirical part of this thesis: Do the five major universities' student bodies represent the 30% Blacks and African Americans that form the largest minority in St. Louis? The result is crucial for all further questions as it will determine whether the black minority is experiencing institutional discrimination or not. If so, then the obvious next line of inquiry attempts to address possible roots and present likely causes as well as feasible approaches to solutions. From there, a text-focused analysis of publications from the field of education guided by a cultural studies approach will help put the locality of the St. Louis results into a national perspective. I expect the texts and

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<sup>23</sup> Waldron (1972) and others.

the case study to show similarities to draw general conclusions about issues in higher education and their causes.

#### **4.1. Methods of Inquiry**

The design of this case study encompasses two levels. First, St. Louis demographic data from the U.S. Census Bureau provides my case study with a national and regional context. Second, expert interviews connect the data, my observations and the texts written on the issue of universal access and establish a conclusive picture of the cultural problem resting within higher education. I expect these three independent perspectives matching in such a way that the factual situation as well as its causes becomes obvious. At that point, the thesis will have succeeded in identifying issues of equality in higher education as not solely dependent on policy but contingent upon the equality discourse often found in social debates in the United States. Therefore, it is not enough to develop new policies but rather to change the way we approach issues of social equality. The cultural studies perspective will expose how such policies are perpetuating and creating educational inequalities rather than addressing them.

##### **3.1.1. Quantitative Data: Statistics**

The statistical data provided by the online databases of the U.S. Census Bureau as well as the National Center for Education Statistics will help put the case study into its geographical context in terms of demographics and also with regard to social and higher education issues. Beginning with a localization of St. Louis and Missouri in the context of the entire United States and its regions, national data about degree conferrals as well as state enrollment numbers will continue to focus the analysis down to St. Louis itself. From there, I will compare and analyze

Broadly speaking, Missouri is a state situated in the heart of the country between two of the four regions the U.S. are divided into: the South and the Midwest. Both of these areas connote not merely a geographical location but represent cultural identities that are closely connected to assumptions about ethnicities, political orientations as well as social peculiarities. The figure below shows Missouri's unique location as one of the Midwestern states bordering the Southern states west of the Mississippi river.

[illegible]

The first question is now whether the key geographical location of Missouri translates into special cultural and therefore also educational circumstances. In order to make that assessment, I use population data and provide percentages of the white majority and the largest minority: black Americans. A closer look at the populations of Missouri and its surrounding states in Table 4 below supports my claim of Missouri being a special case in many ways.

**Table 4**  
**Population numbers and minority percentages for Missouri and surrounding states.**

<b>State</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Percentage White</b>	<b>Black or African American</b>	<b>Percentage Black</b>
<b>MO</b>	5,878,415	5,001,012	85.1%	677,657	11.5%
<b>IA</b>	2,988,046	2,819,510	94.4%	77,477	2.6%
<b>IL</b>	12,852,548	10,177,118	79.2%	1,926,515	15.0%
<b>KY</b>	4,241,474	3,816,958	90.0%	326,930	7.7%
<b>TN</b>	6,156,719	4,948,404	80.4%	1,039,321	16.9%
<b>AR</b>	2,834,797	2,293,040	80.9%	448,230	15.8%
<b>OK</b>	3,617,316	2,833,428	78.3%	286,849	7.9%
<b>KS</b>	2,775,997	2,467,314	88.9%	168,531	6.1%
<b>NE</b>	1,774,571	1,625,144	91.6%	78,581	4.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates Program.

In this table, Missouri's and its bordering states' population ratios between the white and black population are compared. Iowa and Nebraska as the northern neighboring states have the lowest black population percentage while the southern states Tennessee and Arkansas have more than 15%. As a first step, these numbers prove that there is a difference in population distribution between the southern and the northern states.

Illinois is a special case among Midwestern states because its black population centers in Chicago whereas the lower part of the state is predominantly white. However, both Oklahoma

and Kansas as Midwestern states have around seven percent of black population. That puts Missouri in position between the typically Midwestern and the typically southern characteristic. Hence, it can be presumed that the demographics influence the educational landscape of Missouri in a way typical for again both regions. More specifically, the ethnic divide as it exists in many southern states will reflect in education data as well.

**Table 5**  
**College fall enrollment in percentages, 2005.**

State	White	Minority				
		<i>Total</i>	<i>Black</i>	<i>Hispanic</i>	<i>Asian/ Pacific Islander</i>	<i>American Indian/ Alaska Native</i>
<b>MO</b>	79.1	18.4	12.4	2.8	2.5	0.6
<b>IA</b>	86.5	10.5	5.1	2.8	2.1	0.5
<b>IL</b>	65.2	31.9	14.3	11.5	5.8	0.4
<b>KY</b>	86.9	11.4	8.7	1.2	1.2	0.3
<b>TN</b>	74.4	23.6	19.5	1.8	1.9	0.4
<b>AR</b>	75.3	22.9	18.3	2.0	1.4	1.1
<b>OK</b>	70.3	25.1	9.2	3.5	2.3	10.2
<b>KS</b>	81.2	15.8	5.9	4.5	3.8	1.7
<b>NE</b>	86.5	10.8	4.2	3.5	2.3	0.7

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2005 Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Spring 2006.

The regional demographic pattern between the North and the South is mirrored in the fall enrollment data from 2005 shown in Table 5 above. The two northern states Iowa and Nebraska have a high percentage in white students with only a 10% total of minority students enrolled. The southern states Tennessee and Arkansas, on the contrary, show a lower percentage of white college students yet more than double of the percentage in minority enrollments. The Midwestern states should therefore, if consistent with their geographical location in the middle, have enrollment percentages somewhere between the northern and southern data.

Indeed, the Midwestern states of Oklahoma and Kansas are in the middle of the northern and southern trend. Their percentages together with Missouri's percentages of white students as well as the minority enrollments are distributed center of the numbers from the southern and northern region. Again, Missouri proves to be a typical Midwestern state in terms of its education data.

Additionally, a close examination within the subdivision of black minority enrollments strengthens the argument that social peculiarities surface reliably in education statistics. Here again, the northern states have much fewer black enrollments than their southern counterparts. Missouri is again framed by the two but its numbers are leaning heavily toward the southern extreme of high black minority numbers. In other words, while Missouri is otherwise in the middle of the northern and southern trend, it is much more typically southern with regard to black student enrollment.

The enrollment numbers presented above suggest that the black community's access to higher education depends on location. More than local peculiarities, my thesis attempts to show that universal access in a nation wide issue and seeks to establish correlation as well as causation between percentages of white and black students in higher education. Table 5 below affirms the relationship between ethnicity and academic success.

**Table 6**  
**Academic degrees conferred nationally, 2000-06.**

Degree	Year	Number of degrees conferred	Percentage distribution of degrees conferred		
			Total	White	Black
<b>B.A.</b>	2000-01	1,244,171	100.0	74.5	8.9
	2001-02	1,291,900	100.0	74.2	9.0
	2002-03	1,348,811	100.0	73.7	9.2
	2003-04	1,399,542	100.0	73.3	9.4
	2004-05	1,439,264	100.0	72.9	9.5

	2005-06	1,485,242	100.0	72.4	9.6
<b>M.A.</b>	2000-01	468,476	100.0	68.4	8.2
	2001-02	482,118	100.0	68.0	8.4
	2002-03	513,339	100.0	66.6	8.7
	2003-04	558,940	100.0	66.1	9.1
	2004-05	574,618	100.0	66.0	9.5
	2005-06	594,065	100.0	66.2	9.9
<b>Doctorates</b>	2000-01	44,904	100.0	61.1	4.9
	2001-02	44.160	100,0	60.9	5.4
	2002-03	46.042	100,0	60.2	5.5
	2003-04	48.378	100,0	58.3	6.0
	2004-05	52.631	100,0	57.5	5.8
	2005-06	56.067	100,0	56.4	5.6

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Higher Education General Information Survey (HEGIS), "Degrees and Other Formal Awards Conferred" surveys, 1976-77 and 1980-81; and 1989-90 through 2005-06 Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, "Completions Survey" (IPEDS-C:90-99), and Fall 2000 through Fall 2006.

Table 6 shows that from 2000 to 2006, the percentage of black degree holders with B.A. and Ph.D.s has increased by 0.7 percent points and almost double that amount in the area of M.A. degrees. Even though the numbers of conferred degrees have continually risen for black students and decreased for white graduates, there is still a gaping distance in numbers between the two groups. In accordance with the demographic and education statistics presented in this chapter, the national degree conferrals suggest a clear divide between academics of different ethnicities.

So the case study of St. Louis is located in a state and a region that experiences an imbalance between majority and minority education considering enrollment and degree conferrals. Applying the same line of thought, Table 7 and Table 8 allow for a closer look regarding the demographic specifics of educational level by St. Louis area. The detailed view on educational differences between the city and the county of St. Louis is necessary to conclude



whether or not black St. Louisians experience academic imbalance against their white counterparts similar to the national level.

**Table 7**  
**Demographic overview of St. Louis County.**

Population	White	African American or black	Percentage of African American or black population	Population 25 and over	
998,368	733,156	212,683	21.30%	670,333	
Educational attainment: Population 25 and over					
less than 9th grade	9th to 12th grade, no diploma	high school graduate (includes equivalency)	Some college, no degree	B.A.	Graduate or professional degree
22,640	44,710	163,745	141,974	155,977	99,125
Percentage of educational attainment in relation to population of 25 and over					
3.38%	6.67%	24.43%	21.18%	23.27%	14.79%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2005-2007 Community Survey.

**Table 8**  
**Demographic overview of St. Louis City.**

Population	White	African American or black	Percentage of African American or black population	Population 25 and over	
352,389	161,917	173,490	49.23%	230,050	
Educational attainment: Population 25 and over					
less than 9th grade	9th to 12th grade, no diploma	high school graduate (includes equivalency)	Some college, no degree	B.A.	Graduate or professional degree
17,246	33,884	66,777	45,047	32,715	22,456
Percentage of educational attainment in relation to population of 25 and over					
7.50%	14.73%	29.03%	19.58%	14.22%	9.76%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2005-2007 Community Survey.

The population data alone suggests a severe socio-economic imbalance in that it shows how much more black residents live in the city as opposed to the county. Equally, the level of educational attainment mirrors the ethnic imbalance and indicates less academic success for city residents. Since the educational attainment rates clearly correlate with the population's ethnicity, I argue that there is causation as well. In other words, it is no coincidence that areas with a large black population consistently show lower levels of educational success and as Table 8 illustrates below, lower economic standing at the same time.

To further support the claim of causation, I have extracted specific data of the different percentages of educational attainment for St. Louis city and county separately. These numbers report on the percentage of the population's highest educational level. When comparing these numbers by area, it shows that many more city residents only have some schooling or went to high school without graduating. Those numbers are much lower in the county. Equally, county residents' terminal education is much better: The percentages of people with university experience or a higher academic degree clearly exceed those of the city by far.

The geographical divide between St. Louis city and county has been based on demographic data so far, proving that the city inhabits many more black residents than the county does, and on educational data, showing that the city's level of education is generally much lower than the county's. Finally, economic data about income situations will tie in with my hypothesis and support the claim that these three aspects, social, educational, economical, function together and create a divide between the ethnicities.

**Table 9**  
**St. Louis' economic data, in Dollars**

<b>St. Louis area</b>	<b>Mean family income</b>	<b>Mean household income</b>	<b>Per capita income</b>	<b>Percentage of families whose income in the past 12 months is below the poverty level</b>	<b>Percentage of people whose income in the past 12 months is below the poverty level</b>
County	96,797	79,601	35,592	6.1	8.9
City	54,082	45,050	19,422	20.5	24.7

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2005 – 2007 American Community Survey.

The economic imbalance in income between city and county shown in Table 9 is significant and constitutive of the educational and therefore social options available. The average city resident has only half the income of the average person living in the county and the family and household incomes compare similarly. Equally, the percentages of people living below the poverty line exemplify the divide drastically. A fifth of all city residents are affected while the county has far less than 10% of residents who suffer from severe poverty.

The quantitative data presents several key points. First, it shows that Missouri and especially St. Louis are relevant points of departure for a case study due to their demographics. The high percentage in black residents prepares the ground to assess empirically whether the minority has an equal share in higher education. Both college enrollment rates and degree conferral numbers collected in Tables 5 and 6 show that the black community is indeed not as represented in higher education as the comparison between the population numbers would lead one to expect.

### **3.2.2. Qualitative Data: Interviews**

Two criteria guided the selection process for the interviewees: They had to possess at least three years of experience as a faculty member or a higher rank, and they had to show an interest in issues of higher education. Initially, I approached individuals I had known from my time in St. Louis but during the summer of 2008, the snowball method expanded my list of interview partners to thirteen people. The order was solely determined by the participants' availability. In one interview I had two interviewees because the dean had asked his technical assistant to join our conversation and thereby add an administrative focus to his academic view of working in the office of graduate admissions.

There are two interviews with members of admissions that I have included in the data even though these people were asked a different set of questions. Considering the scope of this thesis and the time given for my empirical research, I abandoned my initial plan to create two independent sets of data for academic faculty and admissions. However, I think these two interviews shed important light on the issues raised in the other ten interviews. They offer a more detailed view on how the institutional selection process works which may help explain some aspects of higher education today.

The questions for faculty can be divided into three groups: personal ones about the individuals' expertise and current position as well as their workload; questions regarding their impressions and experiences in general, and opinion questions. Some turned out to be either too repetitive or they were interesting but irrelevant to my inquiry. The following two tables show the final selection of questions:

**Table 10**  
**Faculty interview question set**

Section	Question
Personal questions	What is your field of research?
	At this point, do you advise any theses or dissertations?
	How often do you participate in conferences, annual meetings etc.?
Impression and experience questions	Why do people enroll in a B.A. program?
	Describe an ideal person after finishing a B.A. program.
	Qualification and Enculturation: Which of the three degrees – B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. - does what and to what extent?
	What changes, if any, have you experienced in the student body?
	In what areas does university constitute itself as a community?
Opinion questions	Why, in your opinion, are the 30% black residents of St. Louis not represented in higher education?
	Is American higher education a universal access system?

The admissions questionnaire below contains an additional set of questions regarding the details of the specific application process for two reasons. First, applying to graduate school in the U.S. does not vary significantly among institutions but it is different from processes in other parts of the world. Therefore, this part will provide a general guideline for how the process is undertaken. Second, it will help make the point that minority access to higher education is not prevented openly by specific policy but occurs implicitly. The application process has been standardized to guarantee objectivity and fairness but it still fails to address the problem the

standardization creates before minority students even get to apply. This issue will be discussed in more detail in a later chapter of this thesis.

**Table 110**  
**Admission interview question set**

Section	Question
Personal question	What functions do you perform?
Admissions	Briefly describe the admissions process.
	What characterizes a successful applicant?
	What are red flags?
	Does religious affiliation play a role?
	Are applicants interviewed?
Impression and experience questions	Why do people enroll in graduate programs?
	What changes, if any, have you seen in the student body?
	How does university constitute itself as a community?
Opinion questions	Why, in your opinion, are the 30% black residents of St. Louis not represented in higher education?
	Is American higher education a universal access system?

In preparation of the evaluation, I transcribed each interview in full sentences. Even though it would have been more fruitful especially for a linguistically focused analysis to illustrate pauses and incomplete sentences, this detailed level of interpretation was omitted, mostly for reasons of efficiency and in light of my research focus.

As mentioned before, the data for this qualitative part of the case study is a selection of questions that I made after conducting and transcribing the interviews. The wording varies because I was eager to create a conversational atmosphere with my interview partners. Even though I assured them of confidentiality, I wanted to make sure they would speak openly and honestly about their opinions and concerns. In retrospect, I can say that I have achieved that goal.

In order to use the interview materials effectively yet fulfill the promise of confidentiality, I coded the institution as well as my interview partners in the table below. The general description of the university will help explain some of the answers and put them in an institutional context.

<b>Table 12</b> <b>Interviewee coding</b>			
<b>Code</b>	<b>Description of Institution</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Code</b>
X.	Small, private, liberal arts focus	Dean of Education	Dr. H.
XI.	Small, private, teaching focus	Dean of Arts and Sciences	Dr. D.
		Interim Chair, International Relations	Dr. R.
		Dean of Education	Dr. F.
XII.	Large, private, religiously affiliated, research focus	Department Chair of Modern Languages	Dr. A.
		Dean of Education	Dr. W.
		Dean of Graduate Admissions	Dr. B.
		Assistant for Graduate Admissions	Ms. DC.
XIII.	Large, private, almost ivy-league, prestigious, strong national research	Dean of Dept. for Romance Languages	Dr. S.
		Assistant Professor for Germanic Studies	Dr. M.

	focus	Assistant Professor for Anthropology	Dr. C.
XIV.	Large, public, multi-campus	Department Head of Education	Dr. P.
XV.	Small, private, religiously affiliated	Dean of Graduate Admissions	Ms.D.

Concerning the identities of the interviewees, I can say that all six women and five men are middle aged, white members of the middle or upper middle class. Two individuals have a history of immigration from a Latin American country to the U.S. and the vast majority looks back on professional experience at multiple institutions around the country and the world.

## **4.2. Findings**

Due to the variation between the two question sets, I will first turn to the faculty interviews and then in the second half of this chapter discuss the answers from the admissions interviews. The answers to both sets' opinion questions will be analyzed together.

### **4.2.1. Faculty Interviews**

The first question in section one of the faculty question set asks about the interviewee's field of research and even though all of the interviewees work in the broad area of the humanities, there is variation in terms of their direct research focus. Two individuals are within German studies with a focus on Jewish and Holocaust studies as well as exile studies respectively. From the field of education, I spoke with one educational psychologist, an expert in early childhood education, one professor for teacher education and another who is publishing within language education, school policy and teacher identity formation. Finally, there was one



faculty member holding a position within Latin American literature and culture and another who works in social and cultural anthropology.

The answers to the second question were equally similar. All but four individuals advise theses or dissertations at the moment, either at their current institution or the ones they were with before. One person only advises undergraduate final papers which are less complex and much shorter than a thesis, and the other had just finished one from his last institution and has not yet started others at their new university.

The last question in this section reveals that the majority of interviewees attend conferences and annual meetings two or three times a year on average. Only one stated attending three to five meetings per year when chairing the department while doing the same amount as the others when holding a professorship. Another person did not mention a concrete number and yet another felt to be attending conferences “constantly” (Dr. F. 1). However differently worded, all interviewees made a point of enjoying being actively involved in the academic community beyond fulfilling their immediate position requirements. Also, they all fulfill different functions at those meetings and either organize, participate, present or chair individual sessions.

As discussed in a previous chapter of this thesis, there are various concerns in the academy today that I believe are rooted in the same cultural and social problems that define the United States and its higher educational system. Section two of the question set allows the interviewees to speak about their concerns. These are in turn expected to be the same issues addressed in the literature reviewed in chapter five of this thesis. To show that these nationally discussed issues are manifest also directly in St. Louis will later allow expanding possible solutions for this city to a nationwide suggestions.

*Why do people enroll in a B.A. program?*

All interviewees see a professionally oriented population of students who enter a Bachelor program with the expectation of increasing their job market value. While most acknowledge that there are still students who take a liberal arts approach, study for the sake of learning and orientate themselves academically, there is a consensus that these are rare cases today. Three individuals specifically point out that there are two general approaches they feel students have: Either their attempt is to advance economically, or they are already positioned in the middle and upper middle class and accept going to college as a “fact of life” (Dr. C. 1). Also, one interviewee made a key point about students’ motivation being dependent on the institution: “If you were to go to an inner city, state [school], the reasons would be very different” (Dr. M. 1). Again, her answer confirms the geographical divide that is closely connected to socio-economic status. She puts her institution, a large private prestigious school, in opposition to one within city limits or the ones who are mostly funded by the state. Her statement speaks to my observation of how self-evident these divisions are for the interviewees and society in general.

*Describe an ideal person after finishing a B.A. program.*

All descriptions share the expectation of skills such as critical thinking, well-roundedness, analytical skills, reflectivity and being a productive member of society as being the ones that a B.A. graduate ideally should have acquired during the program. One individual specifically mentioned both maturity and solid writing skills as two critical achievements all graduates should take away with them. At the same time, she criticized that, regrettably, this was often not the case. Another person from the same institution points out that often times BA students come out of their programs being too “immersed in a single technical field” (Dr. C. 2) and do not have the chance to experience the liberal arts idea of an education that concerns the

whole person rather than just the content area part. Still at the same school, one professor stated that she does not

think much about preparing [her] students for the workplace other than instilling in them discipline and respect and the idea that they have to come to class and be prepared like you would on a job. [...] It's more about preparing them to be responsible citizens. (Dr. M. 1)

Her opinion is countered by a dean's perspective on the purpose of a B.A. program. In his view, it is supposed to provide "some kind of field experience and [preparation to be] ready to jump into a position" (Dr. W. 2).

*Qualification and Enculturation: Which of the three degrees – B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. - does what and to what extent?*

In accordance with the thesis statement, the question reveals that the B.A. is understood as having a balance between qualification and the enculturation part while M.A. and Ph.D. share a strong focus on qualification. Slightly diverging from my definition of those two terms provided in chapter two, many individuals found that enculturation might be read from another perspective, especially when talking about the M.A. and Ph.D. level. The idea that a Ph.D. degree fulfills the function of familiarizing students with methods and academic discourses, modes of thinking as well as modes of social interaction came up more than once. This shows, I think, how much the concepts of qualification and enculturation are applicable to the field of higher education and the great significance they have for analyzing social dynamics on different levels.

With enculturation being read as either a process of entrance into society or the academic world, one professor pointed out that even the B.A. serves two functions for two different groups of students: For some, this initial degree has the ability to grant social mobility and simply serves

as completion to their schooling. For others, however, it is the beginning of academic enculturation and is meant to lead to advanced degrees. All individuals pointed out the large variations between the disciplines and the fact that their perspectives are guided by the experience from within the humanities.

In the same line of thought, one interviewee clearly attributes the level of enculturation during the B.A. to class issues. Her position is that

[i]f you are already solidly in the upper middle class, you can afford to major in German and wonder what you are going to do after graduation. If you are in a class situation where you really have to take advantage of the four years and you or your parents are paying a lot or you're borrowing a lot, then the idea is that qualifications be number one. (Dr. M. 2)

A similar point is made by a dean who identifies a general shift away from enculturation and he explains this phenomenon in much the same way his colleague does. He still views the B.A. as a degree that balances both functions but within the last 30 years, he has seen a change toward qualification.

### **3.2.2. Faculty and Admissions Questions**

In this section, I want to analyze those four questions that were similar on both questionnaires, because they are most essential to my hypothesis. Also, I expect the answers to be the same independent of the individuals' area of expertise.

*What changes, if any, have you experienced in the student body?*

Across the board, my interview partners mentioned lack of writing and reading skills, but at the same time agreed that generally the quality in students has risen over the past years. Similar agreement is found when characterizing the new generation of students that one individual called "millennials" (Dr. P. 4). The interviewees experience them as "egocentric" (Dr.

M. 2), “pragmatic” (Dr. S. 1) and service oriented rather than willing to adapt to standards of an academic discipline (Dr. M. 3).

From my text-based research I understand that a great concern is students’ growing sense of entitlement and the customer approach to university. Only one individual disagreed with the notion that especially B.A. students see themselves in a position to demand services from the institution and its faculty, much more than what used to be the case. Possible causes for this phenomenon as well as its implications will be discussed in the next section of this chapter and also in chapter five.

*In what areas does university constitute itself as community?*

All interviewees pointed out four key elements: freshmen seminars and convocations, sports, campus activities and the campus as a physical space. In addition, two individuals mentioned specific elements geared toward the faculty. Shirts and gifts but also events like workshops, cocktail hours and socials are meant to draw together the professors and give them the feeling of being part of an institutional identity rather than just individuals working alongside each other.

Again, there is a consensus as to how institutional identity is formed. Similarity is created by “inventing a tradition” (Dr. R. 7) and introducing a “mode of speaking” (Dr. C. 4) together with a “language of community” (Dr. C. 4) that sets the institution apart not only from its immediate physical environment but other universities. In terms of space, they “create places to study, eat, congregate and meet” (Dr. P. 5) and encourage the formation of various student interest groups. Finally, small class sizes are perceived to allow for establishing relationships that go beyond the classroom.

*Why, in your opinion, are the 30% black residents of St. Louis not represented in higher education?*

However varied the examples and solution ideas for this issue, the reasons are clear according to the interviewees' answers. There are four main areas that were either all or in part mentioned by every single individual I spoke with. All following points come back to what one professor made abundantly clear: "Class matters at university" (Dr. M. 5). It is indeed relevant what socio-economic background students have, of what quality their education in high school was and whether they belong to those 30% black St. Louisians that are mostly members of "the working or under class" (Dr. R. 6).

A vivid example of these dynamics is given by Dr. B. when he reports that even though his institution manages to recruit ethnic minorities for these programs, they lose a great percentage of them within the first year. From this teaching experience with the freshmen seminar, he senses that students tend to group themselves along the lines of economic possibilities. As a result, those freshmen who do not have to work and own a car, for instance, seem to socialize with students of similar characteristics. Those who are in a less fortunate position, however, have fewer social bonds and are more likely to leave despite institutions' efforts to get them involved in university life. (Dr. B. 7)

The second main area of this issue traces the problem to a point much earlier than the freshmen year. Again, all individuals attribute the situation to the horrendous state the city public schools are in. Aside from poor financing which is a result of the property tax regulations, they also seamlessly connect the social divide between city and county population to diversity at college. From the answers it is evident that those are "systemic problems" (Dr. D. 5): lower high school graduation rates, low college attendance rates, poor health, more drug use, much less

socio-economic status, higher numbers in teenage pregnancies are experienced by the black community to a much higher extent than by others (Dr. D. 5).

The third aspect addresses pressures that come into play when individuals do actually accomplish goals at school and may have the chance to transcend class boundaries. Often times, the social environment and its culture do not have the tradition of studying and therefore it is not valued. “Unfortunately, there is ‘acting white’ if you get educated” (Dr. B. 6, Dr. D. 5).

In accordance with Dr. B.’s experience in his freshmen seminars, the interviewees also observe that one criterion for choosing a university is the already existing community of students’ own social group. So if an institution has problems retaining minority students the likelihood of this cycle to continue is significant. For St. Louis, this development becomes clear when looking at the five campuses of the universities I selected. It is easy to see that some are by a great majority populated by white and others by black students.

Lastly, issues of finance are involved in all of the aforementioned dynamics in more than one way. The fact that tuition is as expensive as we see it today directly discriminates against the poor (Dr. H. 7) and makes generational poverty one of the major criteria why those 30% black St. Louisians are not represented in higher education. An often heard counter argument is the system of student loans, both federal and private, that allegedly eases the pressure on financially disadvantaged students. I confronted the interviewees with those views taken from my text research and all of them reacted negatively and some even emotionally. Ms. DC. makes the clearest statement:

I think it’s the institution and the cost that defines the university and makes people not want to go. People can’t afford it. It’s rising 6% every year and then you hear on the media that it is 40,000 dollars for a semester or year, the guy who has the dirt under his fingernails doesn’t even earn that in a year. It’s unrealistic. (Ms. DC. 6)

Dr. B immediately connects her observation to the cultural issue:

Thus he is going to sneer at it. That's a very good point, very good point. We do not have equal access to education. It's not open to people who work for 8 dollars an hour. They can't come to XII., there's no way. You cannot afford it. It's not accessible to everybody, not public and especially not private. (Dr. B. 6)

The notion seems to be that even though the loan system is in place, there are still many people left out because even though a loan would enable them to study, there is no option for them to pay it back without a significant risk of not being able to do so. As a result, people are turning away from higher education or at least find themselves influenced in their program choice. Dr. C. gives testimony to that point:

If I thought I had to take out a loan, I probably wouldn't have studied Anthropology. I probably would have been more pressured to study something with some sort of business return to it. My brother joined the army because he didn't have any money. He gave his life, well figuratively, not literally...not yet anyway. So I can't speak for the experience, but does it matter? Yes, it matters. (Dr. C. 5)

So the argument that the loan system has the potential to close the gap between those who can afford to pay for higher education and those who cannot is voided and exposed as not only ineffective but supportive of further division between those two groups. Rather than enabling social equality, the loan system is

predatory in the sense that the loan industry loves the structure because they make money off of it. The university can raise their tuition and they have someone who is going to cover the tuition for them and they can counsel students into the loan industry. (Dr. W. 6)

One interviewee ascribes a certain amount of responsibility to the institutions themselves by advocating more careful advising. She also shares her experience with students who are not likely to succeed academically but keep trying to stay in the program while taking on even more debt (Dr. F. 7).



*Is American higher education a universal access system?*

All individuals resolutely answer in the negative and generally present one of two reasons for this situation. Students experience inequality in access by either not having been academically prepared by their high school to attend college, or they do not have the social and cultural knowledge to work through the system of test taking and admissions in order to even be considered.

The overall tenor, again, is that issues of inequality come into play long before students apply to an institution. The interviewees describe universal access as “a myth” (Dr. C. 5) and a concept that is “more ideological than reality” (Dr. A. 5), another two “totally disagree” (Dr. B. 5) with the notion or “couldn’t be more appalled that someone would even suggest such a thing” (Dr. R. 7).

### **3.2.3. Admissions Interviews**

Both of these interviews briefly present the admissions process and will help make the point that discrimination is not in a way performed by individuals or distinct policy, but embedded in the structures that were put in place to prevent social injustice in the first place.

*What functions do you perform?*

One of the interviewees is in charge of supervising processes within the admissions department such as filing paperwork, overseeing staff members’ work and maintaining contact with applicants. The other individual works much more closely with the academic departments and directly decides, on the basis of the departments’ recommendation, who is offered admission and who will be rejected.

*Briefly describe the admissions process.*

Depending on the exact requirements of each program and department, the admissions office ensures that all materials are handed in and forwards them to the academic entities for review. Either the department makes the decision directly or returns the materials with a recommendation upon which the deans of admissions base their decision. Key elements of any application are the recommendation letters by former or current professors: “If they can’t find three faculty members who think that they fly from trapezes then they’re not going to get in a Ph.D. program” (Dr. B. 2).

*What characterizes a successful applicant?*

Here, the answers varied according to the status of the institution. The interviewee at the small, private, religious institution pointed out that every individual will be considered and that single measures always go toward the entire picture of the applicant. The other interviewee at the large research school describes a “good fit” (Dr. B. 1) with the research agenda of the department’s faculty as the number one criterion for admission.

*What are red flags?*

Again, differences come out through this question. The individual from the research institution named low GPA<sup>25</sup>, bad recommendation letters and low test scores as warning signs while the other person from the small school made a point in considering everyone, even on probationary status, and only being careful with criminal records and applicants who are not truthful about their academic or personal history.

*Does religious affiliation play a role?*

Both interviewees do not see religion play any role in the admissions process.

*Are applicants interviewed?*

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<sup>25</sup> Grape point average, a value based on class grades commonly used to assess students’ academic ability.

Here again the general selectivity of one institution shows in the policy of interviewing all applicants either personally or by phone. The other university does not regularly perform interviews but reserves the measure for special cases.

*Why do people enroll in graduate programs?*

As in the similar faculty interview question, the answers center around two aspects: “personal satisfaction” (Ms. D, 2) and career advancement as well as the economic outlook in the job market (Dr. B. 3).

#### **4.3. Discussion**

The combination of demographic, educational and economic data presented in this chapter form a conclusive picture of the situation in St. Louis today. Statistical data clearly connects poverty and the black minority by locating both in the inner-city. Adding to that the gaping educational levels, it becomes evident that metropolitan St. Louis is defined by and divided along issues of class and ethnicity.

From the expert interviews, several key elements emerged that are vital to an understanding of how this divide is created and sustained. First, they reaffirm the fact that black individuals are subject to multi-faceted disadvantage long before they enter higher education: poorly performing public schools, poverty and a culture often dismissive of educational success in general hinder chances of success in higher education.

Second, the deciding factor is socio-economic class rather than ethnicity even though they strongly interrelate. As chapter four established, it is mostly the black community in St. Louis that suffers from low socio-economic status and is therefore most affected by the aforementioned disadvantages. However, the same issues apply to other underrepresented groups

such as first generation students and students who grew up in bad economic and educational circumstances. They too attend college at much lower rates and are less academically successful than their middle and upper middle class colleagues. I will elaborate on this issue in chapter five.

Finally, the expert interviews allow for the conclusion that black underrepresentation in higher education in general, and specifically in St. Louis, is the result of discrimination not on the basis of color but, in the end, economic standing. Any student whose parents earned an advanced degree, have an above average income and have been provided above average education will have much greater chances of applying to and succeeding at college or university according to the interviewed experts. Since people with the stated characteristics are mostly white in St. Louis, there is a visible difference in numbers between white and black students. It is, however, only the side effect and hence, my text analysis will inquire about assessments of and policy directed toward closing this gap.

A handful of other relevant aspects developed during these conversations. They do not directly correspond to the research question, but are part of the discourse about higher education and its future. Many individuals pointed to the increased competitiveness among the institutions which shapes their form of communication toward prospective and current students as well as faculty. Various marketing strategies are implemented to strengthen the school's identities. Those are mostly based on traditions and a mode of story telling that is highly arbitrary in many cases but functional in drawing students to attend and therefore invest the money into the respective institution. As a result, financing is automatically linked to student acquisition as they provide the resources for the institution and its members. The interconnection of finance and the institutions' relationship to their students results in dilemmas that go far beyond the process of acquisition. It influences daily communication between students and faculty and subsequently

defines teaching and the classroom. Key texts addressing these and other issues will be discussed in the following chapter.

Standardized entrance testing is another area of concern for most of the experts as it is biased against those who are underrepresented in higher education already. As a means for selection, testing functions not only as a mirror reflecting the academic ability of an individual, but it also reflects other competencies, for example test taking and language comprehension,. Chapter five will further develop positions on this issue and establish the connection between educational policy and Cultural Studies.

## **5. How Universal Is Universal Access?**

The central piece of my thesis is the question whether or not the development of mass higher education in the 1960s has led to universal access today. The concept is defined as the opportunity of higher education for everyone who wants it and is willing to put forth the effort. However, it continues to be a dividing issue among researchers, faculty and policy makers alike.

Vivid examples of people who have succeeded in higher education despite their circumstances supposedly prove that universal access exists and offers a fair chance to all young people. However, even more moderate arguments show “disinterest in, ignorance of, or disregard for empirical evidence” (Rossides 687) and do not take into account the research on the topic that contradicts the existence of universal access.<sup>26</sup> Rather, ethnicity, race and class origin seem to regulate the participation in tertiary level education. My quantitative research clearly shows that St. Louis is a city deeply affected by class divisions that pervade education. In order to find explanations for and causes of this empirical reality, the analysis now moves from a quantitative perspective to a qualitative approach.

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<sup>26</sup> See Rossides, Van Valey, Fischer and others.

The expert interviews in chapter four serve as a starting point for the following text based inquiry about the current general issues discussed in higher education. I found that many of my interviewees' concerns are reflected in recent publications of higher education researchers as well. Hence, the results of my interviews speak to nationwide debates and prompt my broader discussion of access to American higher education.

### **5.1. The American Dream of Higher Education**

As Jacques Barzun<sup>27</sup> observes, “[i]t is agreed that all who can more or less read and write and want to go to college should be able to. Lack of money should not be a hindrance” ( Barzun 49). This firm belief in basic equality for everyone traces back to the cultural concept of the American Dream, and its myth persists in higher education as much as it does in other structures of society.

The American Dream of Higher Education in its core encompasses the same values as the cultural principle: Every individual has the same opportunities regardless of its ethnic, racial, religious or social background. Equality, therefore, is defined as having the same chance of success for everyone who is willing to put in the effort and hard work that will eventually be rewarded. Therefore, achievements are not results of predispositions but reflections of work ethic.

Applying the same reasoning to those who are unsuccessful, however, creates a dangerous argument: Since the development of one's potential lies within individual responsibility, failures are solely attributable to lack of personal effort. Drawing this direct conclusion is not only invalid but disastrous for any social structure as it annihilates mutual respect as well as support among members of a given society. The recent discussion around

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<sup>27</sup> Barzun, Jacques. "Social Concerns: Trim the College!" *American Outlook* 5.3 (2002): 49-52.

health care is only one example of the cultural status quo that sides with the successful and leaves everyone else out.

A similar line of argument underlies every aspect of American higher education in ways that have profound societal consequences. There is a clear consensus that higher education should be accessible for everyone who is willing to invest in it but opinions diverge on the issue of whether that is the case. The fact that higher education in the U.S. more often than not includes investing a substantial amount of money aside from effort and time is broadly accepted in society as a necessary evil. As a result, Jeffrey Williams<sup>28</sup> concludes, the reality today is “indentured students” (Williams 197) who “agree to future servitude in exchange for their transit through higher education to attain [...] a decent, middle-class job” (Williams 197).

The role of tuition and finance in connection with access to higher education is a significant and highly debated one in the field. Finance specialists tend to focus on the question of whether the net price of tuition has risen in the last decades, and their conclusions vary. What remains is the reality that few families can afford to pay college tuition without the help of long-term savings or loans. For those who did not have the resources to save money for their children in time, there is a federal loan system in place that perpetuates rather than solves the lack of financial support.

## **5.2. Tuition and finance**

There are numerous attempts by a variety of authors to defend the charge that college education has become unbearably expensive. One is to treat tuition and other expenses separately to show that net tuition is not significantly higher than it was some decades ago. In his article

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<sup>28</sup> Williams, Jeffrey (Jeffrey J. ). "The Post-Welfare State University." *American Literary History* 18.1 (2006): 190-216.

“Those ‘Out-of-Control Costs’”, D. Bruce Johnstone<sup>29</sup> spends the first half of his article on defending the view that

[...] it is still true that any student who is of traditional college age, at least somewhat academically able, and willing to borrow or work part time can attend some college or university regardless of the financial status of that student’s family. (Johnstone 146)

Even though I agree with this statement, it is beside the point in the debate about universal access because it does not take into consideration how part time work or a loan affects the student. Few manage to achieve the same success having to divide their time between school and work than if their only concern was to excel academically. There is a substantial amount of research suggesting that “difficulties with financing college may put undo strain on students in ways that affect performance and satisfaction” (Fischer 128). So it is easy to agree that attending higher education is possible, but it is not under equal circumstances, because of carrying the disadvantage of a larger workload from the very beginning.

A second line of argument in defense of college costs is that “low-cost alternatives are available for almost anyone”<sup>30</sup> and therefore, access to higher education is guaranteed. Clearly, he is right in the sense that the community college system has been growing tremendously over the last 20 years. Today, it serves as either a cheap option for general education credits that can be transferred later toward a B.A. degree, or it is an option for those less wealthy to begin their academic career with an Associate’s Degree or a certification. It is again proof that access to quality university education comes with a price and if that cannot be paid, students are left with lower level or unfinished degrees. The fact that lack of money only provides for some college

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<sup>29</sup> Altbach, Philip G., Patricia J. Gumpert and D. Bruce Johnstone. *In Defense of American Higher Education*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001.

<sup>30</sup> Birnbaum R. And Frank Shushok Jr. „The ‚Crisis“ Crisis in Higher Education“: Is that a Wolf or a Pussycat at the Academy’s Door?“ in Altbach, Philip G., Patricia J. Gumpert and D. Bruce Johnstone. *In Defense of American Higher Education*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001.



points toward my argument that a quality, proper university education is not accessible for everyone but depending on the ability to find financial resources.

A third and rather general assumption is that even for those who do not receive a full scholarship or any private support, there are still federal funding options. The issue is that federal aid has changed over the last century from “direct entitlement to pay tuition and expenses” (Williams 197) to “a subvention to pay the interest on student loans for tuition and expenses but not the tuition itself” (Williams 197). As a result, these Safford Loans and Federal Parent Loans ensure both the bank and the university but hold the student with their co-signer liable at all times. In the event of failure to make payments, the loaners are “subject to garnished wages” (Williams 197) and other standard procedures.

Jacques Barzun<sup>31</sup> pointedly addresses the aforementioned arguments from a purely logical standpoint. Against the defense that there are less expensive schools from which students may choose he holds the fact that lower tuition has the same effect on people with lower income than an elite school’s tuition has on the middle class family (Barzun 49). Consequently, it is not true that the market offers a “variety [that] gives everybody a chance to find the place that suits his or her talents. That is pious nonsense” (Barzun 49).

In my view, the market does offer a great variety but the choice between those different options is determined by money and social class. Bruce Johnstone supports that assertion in the second half of his essay when stating that

[...] it is at least intuitively likely that there are some, perhaps many, students who could profit from higher education (and from whose higher education society would also profit) who are dissuaded from college in part because of its expense [...]. We also know that these ‘dissuaded’ students are disproportionately from low-income, African American, Latino, and Native American families (Johnstone 169)

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<sup>31</sup> Barzun, Jacques. "Social Concerns: Trim the College!" *American Outlook* 5.3 (2002): 49-52.

So the reality is that even though higher education comes at different price levels, the price range alone results in an imbalanced student body nationwide. The idea of leaving university with an average debt of \$18,000 in 2002 (Williams 197) puts enormous pressure on the choice of whether or not to attend university and this pressure persists throughout academic studies.

As with all complex issues, the solution does not present itself in one aspect. As Perna<sup>32</sup> argues convincingly, the question of financing higher education needs to “be shifted back toward access for lower-income students and away from affordability for middle-income students” (Perna 232). If the goal is to create a system of universal access with the focus on those who need help rather than making it easier for those who have a good chance anyway, it “will require attention [...] to nonfinancial barriers [...] particularly to the quality of academic preparation and achievement” (Perna 232). In other words, it is of major importance what happens before a student applies to higher education, and it functions as a determiner for his or her success. As Bruce Johnstone words it,

[...] as long as college preparedness in America is so overwhelmingly affected by the socioeconomic setting of the family, the school, and their neighborhood, American values will demand the second (and third) chance that our extraordinarily accessible colleges, both public and private, provide. (Johnstone 173)

His point contributes to my analysis presented in chapter four that policy alone will not be able to make universal access a reality for all students. Rather, there needs to be an inclusive perspective such as a cultural studies view that is able to “fix at least some of the problems of a society in which higher education is increasingly important to economic and social opportunity” (Johnstone 175).

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<sup>32</sup> Perna, Laura W. “Financing Higher Education at Selective Private Institutions: Implications for College Access and Choice.” *The Review of Higher Education*. Vol. 25: 2, (2002): 225-235.

My empirical research presented in chapter four focuses on the African American minority in St. Louis and clearly shows how the group does not share equal opportunities with the other ethnicities. The correlation between ethnicity and socioeconomic status is significant and proven to be an issue also in the Latino, Asian and Native American communities. However, the attention needs to be put on education prior to entering into the higher education system in order to prepare all high school students as sufficiently as possible.

### **5.3. Minority Gaps**

An often heard argument against the existence of a minority gap in higher education points to great improvements regarding minority access and the presentation of rising enrollment numbers of minority students. It is true that there are many more minority students than there were ten or twenty years ago, but that applies to higher education attendance in general. No statistical proof of the increase in minority participation can hide the fact that students with minority status are still underrepresented.

One of the researchers in the area is Mary J. Fischer and her latest published research project on minority success<sup>33</sup> investigates the situation of African American, Asian and Latino students on U.S. American campuses. She confirms that

[f]rom 1976 to 2000, the number of Black students enrolled in degree-granting institutions rose 17.9%, while Hispanic enrollment increased by 25.4% [...]. The vast majority of these students attend predominantly White institutions (Fischer 125).

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<sup>33</sup> Fischer, Mary J. "Settling into Campus Life: Differences by Race/Ethnicity in College Involvement and Outcomes." *The Journal of Higher Education*. 78.2, (01 Jan. 2007): 125-161.

However, the conclusion that universal access is thereby achieved is not valid as some factors affect minority students much more than the rest. Fischer focuses on the transition from high school to university and first identifies

three predominant factors that influence adjustment and subsequent success in college: minority status, socioeconomic disadvantage, and being a first generation college student (Fischer 126).

Her work considers a multiplicity of aspects of which I will only use the results pertaining to minority students and people with a socioeconomic disadvantage. It will support my claim that college preparation and a student's person background are in fact deciding influences that cannot be disregarded in the debate about universal access.

Previous research has proven that involvement in university life tends to be "directly proportional to students' learning and development" (Fischer 127). Also, social ties to both fellow students and faculty have a positive effect on outcomes. It is an obvious fact, therefore, that students who do not feel connected to academic life are statistically more likely to "have lower grades and [to be] more likely to leave college" (Fischer 128) as is the case for African American and Hispanic students. Equally challenging is transition and integration for first generation students because they tend to view higher education "more as a disjunction in their life course, as something that separated them from many of their friends and family" (Fischer 129).

On the level of socioeconomic status, Fischer's empirical research clearly shows what kind of role ethnicity plays. According to her findings, "the vast majority of Asians and Whites came from households making more than \$75,000 a year" (Fischer 134) while the same is only true for around 40% of African American and Hispanic students. The same imbalance exists between the ethnicities with regard to first generation students. Approximately "30% of Black

and Hispanic students came from families in which neither parent had a college degree” (Fischer 134), whereas Whites and Asian students experience the same situation only at the rate of 9% and 16% respectively. In addition, more than half of the expenses are covered by “family and personal resources” (Fischer 134) within the group of Asians and Whites, whereas Black and Hispanic students’ percentages are in the lower thirds.

From these few numbers it is evident that out of those four ethnic groups, Whites and Asians have the more advantageous socioeconomic predispositions. If my hypothesis is true, then as a direct result Black and Hispanic students would suffer academic consequences by being less successful in college or completing their degrees at a lower percentage. In her research, Fischer “not surprisingly” (Fischer 141) finds that

academic performance in college was strongly related to prior academic performance. For all groups, grades in high school were significant predictors of grades in college (Fischer 141).

Hence, the success of the individual ethnic groups in high school AP courses is a strong indicator for how well the students will do in college. Fischer’s results are in accordance with my assumption and show that “Asians took the most AP courses in high school, averaging nearly four AP courses per student” (Fischer 135). The number of Whites follows at 3.25 courses per student. Hispanics hold 2.91 and Black students average at 2.42 AP courses for each individual. Again, the data makes clear that these four ethnic groups experience a divide on the level of socioeconomic status that is paralleled with a division in the area of academic achievement which the above mentioned data reliably predicts.

With regard to degree completion, I refer back to Table 6 in chapter four<sup>34</sup> of this thesis in which I present the percentage distribution of conferred degrees to white and black graduates of B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. programs. The numbers point to a clear lack in equality between white and black students as the minority is severely underrepresented in each academic level and year.

Concerning the social aspect of transition to and success at college, Fischer pinpoints considerable differences between members of ethnic minorities and their majority counterparts:

For instance, involvement in formal activities on campus contributes not only to greater satisfaction for Black and Hispanic students but also to greater academic success. Formal social ties are only marginally significant for Asians, and they are not at all significant for Whites (Fischer 154).

Fischer finds the same observation applied to supporting relationships with faculty that are “particularly important for students whose backgrounds are less congruent with the majority on campus (Fischer 154). Her conclusion is the involvement plays a “crucial role [...] in the success of these students at college” (Fischer 154).

When I interviewed the Dean of Admissions and his assistant at one of the large research institutions of St. Louis, they spoke about their extensive experience with freshmen at college and confirmed Fischer’s results. They see minority students from less economically fortunate backgrounds who “feel alienated” because “their classmates have their own car” and “they think they cannot keep up” (Dr. B. 7). The lack of financial means excludes them from their peers’ social activities until they become disconnected and often times leave the school (Dr. B. 7).

This is only one occasion where my empirical research and my text based analysis of the issue meet and intertwine. It leads my text based inquiry from minority and socioeconomic disadvantage further into the discussion of the systemic perpetuation of the observed and proven

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<sup>34</sup> See page 46.

differences in chances for students. The following part examines this issue in a much broader focus and includes various aspects to show how the larger cultural thought processes need to change before any specific policy can be implemented.

#### **5.4. A Cultural System**

Higher education has always been operating as a part of “the social, political, and economic fabric of American society” (Kuh 61)<sup>35</sup> and this relationship presents itself to be “extremely complex and dynamic” (Birnbaum and Shushok 74). As a result, I look at colleges and universities as a cultural system that is codependent on the society by which it is surrounded. It therefore reacts sensitively to societal changes. John C. Scott<sup>36</sup> pinpoints the issue:

What causes these transformations in the university mission across the centuries? The answer is found in the drive of Western and world civilization. University history, over 850 years, reflects those seismic events that periodically rock humanity. (Scott 5)

In my view, not only the mission of higher education but the system in itself needs to be regarded as reflexive of societal movements. Thus it is important to consider cultural realities and historical developments in order to understand and improve the situation of American higher education today. Even though there is empirical proof of inequalities and massive problems, there are a number of academics who claim that

on balance, [...] the problems we face now are not much different from the problems of the past, each of which has been overcome, and that no fundamental changes in

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<sup>35</sup> Kuh, G. D. “College Students Today: Why We Can’t Leave Serendipity to Chance” in Altbach, Philip G., Patricia J. Gumpert and D. Bruce Johnstone. *In Defense of American Higher Education*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001.

<sup>36</sup> Scott, John C. “The Mission of the University: Medieval to Postmodern Transformations”. *The Journal of Higher Education* 77.1 (January/February 2006): 1-39.

processes, programs or structures are needed to deal with current problems (Birnbaum and Shushok 76).

Universal access is just one of the problems we face today, and even though it is true that equity has been an issue since the beginnings of higher education it is by no means solved yet. A very common counter argument to my proposition claims that

[w]e have been pioneers in such social movements as globalization, affirmative action, and collaborative labor-management relations. Our customers are highly satisfied [...] (Birnbaum and Shushok 77).

The authors then go on to prove alleged customer satisfaction by listing successful marketing techniques: “advertise our names on their car windshields” (77), “live nearby when they retire” and “be buried on our sites” (78). These facts may be true for the elite at the top tier institutions but it is certainly not common practice. Although affirmative action was a groundbreaking policy in the 1980s and changed the way a society looked at minorities and their capabilities, the positive effects were quickly overshadowed by the concern of favoritism that subsequently lead to the abolishment of affirmative action in higher education. All of my interviewees were quite surprised and some even appalled when I asked them about minority percentages in their student body. It is a concept that does not apply to contemporary admission processes anymore.

Other researchers in the field take a historical approach and conclude that even though during the colonial period, “higher education was intended only for educational and societal leaders” (Kuh 279), it has now “evolved from an elitist system to one of universal access” (Kuh 279). The data and texts discussed above prove this assertion to be unfounded. The line of argument presented by Kuh’s text is as confusing and false as his conclusion. He claims that



[i]f collegiate quality were a legitimate concern, it is unlikely that hundreds of thousands of families would annually spend a significant portion of their income on college costs and employers would uniformly prefer candidates with college degrees (Kuh 280).

Kuh's thought process is a prime example of why it is pivotal to introduce an interdisciplinary, multifaceted perspective to the discussion of universal access. A market driven, neo-liberal perspective on higher education may propose that the success of a product is determined solely by the number of buyers. I respectfully dissent and hold against it that there are a variety of low quality products that sell quite well on the open market. Especially in fields like education, society cannot afford to leave quality assessments to anyone else but education professionals and proper research.

With regard to the quality of higher education, researchers often times look to examples that represent the lower end of the institutional spectrum. Instead of starting with the third-tier institutions, William Deresiewicz<sup>37</sup> looks into the question of how elite education at top-tier, highly selective universities create a population of academics incapable of looking beyond their own limitations. As a Harvard educated professor who taught at Yale and Columbia, he openly speaks and writes about the realities of Ivy League college life and assumptions that guide expectations about people and circumstances even before the first class:

There is nothing wrong with taking pride in one's intellect or knowledge. There is something wrong with the smugness and self-congratulation that elite schools connive at from the moment the fat envelopes come in the mail. From orientation to graduation, the message is implicit in every tone of voice and tilt of the head, every old-school tradition, every article in the student paper, every speech from the dean. The message is: You have arrived. Welcome to the club (Deresiewicz 2).

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<sup>37</sup> Deresiewicz, William. "The disadvantages of an elite education: our best universities have forgotten that the reason they exist is to make minds, not careers." *American Scholar*. 77.3 (Summer 2008): p20.

Three main aspects build the center of Deresiewicz' explanation of why elite school education is problematic and at times potentially disadvantageous: "affluent [...] feeder schools, [...] test prep courses and enrichment programs, the whole admissions frenzy and everything that leads up to and away from it" (Deresiewicz 1). What these three elements create are individuals who are "incapable of talking to people who aren't like [them]" (Deresiewicz 1) because against all marketing efforts to suggest diversity on elite campuses, "with respect to class, these schools are largely – indeed increasingly – homogeneous" (Deresiewicz 1).

His statement supports my claim of class as the deciding factor in questions of access to higher education. Also, his observations concur with my assertion that ethnic diversity is no longer the main issue that does not need policy like affirmative action in order to move toward universal access. Rather, the problem is created and sustained by a culture who does not accept "that there are smart people who don't go to elite colleges, often precisely for reasons of class" (Deresiewicz 2). The lack in first-tier institutions, according to Deresiewicz, is found in areas of "social intelligence and emotional intelligence and creative ability" (Deresiewicz 2) because the selection process does not look for the most well-rounded individuals, but "they select for and develop one form of intelligence: the analytic" (Deresiewicz 2).

The broader cultural implication is problematic and defines the system as "elite education not only ushers you into the upper classes; it trains you for the life you will lead once you get there" (Deresiewicz 3). For example, according to Deresiewicz, there is much more leeway at elite schools in terms of rules and regulations. At second and third tier schools, "students [...] don't have a platoon of advisers and tutors and deans to write out excuses for late work, give them extra help [...], pick them up when they fall down" (Deresiewicz 3). His claim is that college "trains [students] for the social position they will occupy once they get out" (Deresiewicz

3). Hence, it is of utmost importance whether everyone has the same chance of getting the quality education he or she is capable of earning because it may define a life's direction.

Referring back to the subsection on finance, the fact that “students from elite schools tend to graduate with less debt” (Deresiewicz 5) and have fewer financial concerns once they finish their degree (Deresiewicz 6) again contributes to class division. One of my interviewees, himself a Harvard graduate and assistant professor at the largest research institution in St. Louis, spoke to the same reality:

If I thought I had to take out a loan, I probably wouldn't have studied Anthropology. I probably would have been more pressured to study something with some sort of business return to it (Dr. C. 5).

This is only one example of how interwoven aspects of finance, class and students' academic choices are. Various other trends and concerns exist within the academy and resonate in my interviews as well as in the published literature. Thomas L. Van Valey<sup>38</sup> discusses two major changes: “the shift toward universal access to higher education and the view of higher education as a business” (Van Valey 1). According to his analysis, they result in

a dramatically more homogeneous student body (and, to a lesser degree, a more homogeneous faculty), increased internal and external pressures for accountability, and the idea of students as customers (Van Valey 1).

All of these have been addressed in my expert interviews and are perceived to be negative yet natural developments in the history of higher education. From the early stages onward, “education was provided for the elite members of a society” (Van Valey 2) and not for the general public. The university system has always carried this principle within itself and it is not any different today. The process functions from top to bottom with the upper middle class

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<sup>38</sup> Van Valey, Thomas L. “Recent changes in higher education and their ethical implications.” *Teaching Sociology*, Vol. 29, (2001): 1-8.

becoming literate first, “followed by the middle classes, and after that, some of the poor and ‘the rest’ (immigrants and minorities)” (Van Valey 2).

Today, this societal power struggle for higher education is still continuing and surfaces in ways that are undeniable. Empirical research as the one presented in chapter four provides proof for the homogeneity of U.S. American campuses today. Also, Fischer’s results discussed in this chapter prompt the conclusion that minorities and other disadvantaged student groups are not openly discriminated against, but nonetheless suffer from an exclusion process that is anchored within the system itself. These facts are results of class selection processes that are cultural in nature and pervade the system. Therefore, they are much harder to specify and address than, for example, racial discrimination was some decades ago.

Although Van Valey is a sociologist and speaks from his area of expertise, his conclusions support my cultural studies viewpoint in so far as there is no need to validate experiences of selection and exclusion with empirical data because

Whether these perceptions are accurate does not really matter. What does matter is that the faculty members, and many of the students, believe them. As sociologists, we know that makes them real. (Van Valey 5)

The notion of discourse constituting reality as much as reality producing discourse is one of the most important structures in cultural studies and I introduced it in chapter two as a key concept of this thesis. It builds the basis for my claim that the expert interviews together with current publications need to be taken seriously as a source of criticism and feedback to the system of higher education and its flaws.

Another aspect in Van Valey’s article and a concern of all of my interviewees is the trend of students perceiving themselves as customers much more than “active participants in the process of higher education” (Van Valey 5). With the amount of money going into their

education, faculty observes a “greater sense of entitlement” (Dr. H. 4) and the tendency to cater to “the individual student’s preferences rather than trying to adapt to the standards of the discipline” (Dr. M. 3). One interviewee answered my question about the customer service idea in higher education even more strongly:

I would absolutely agree with that. I think it’s become such a part of our culture that we don’t even notice it anymore. There is a sense of entitlement: ‘I’m paying there fore I demand’ and I think at a private institution like this one it’s even stronger than at a state institution” (Dr. S. 3).

Resulting from this trend is a concerning shift of responsibility away from the students and onto the faculty or the instructors. The standard practice of faculty evaluation by students is feeding into the idea that a teacher’s quality is measured by either the students or their grades.

Van Valey draws a connection to the nationwide movement of accountability in the U.S. which “derives from the adherence to the economic value associated with a college education” (6). The notion of higher education being a business in which students invest leads many of them to “question the utility or effectiveness of some of the classes” (Van Valey 6). In his conclusion, he proposes eight measures to counter the developments institutionally but again leaves aside the fact that from a cultural studies perspective, mere adaptation of the colleges will not do in addressing culturally rooted issues effectively.

Even though there are still a multitude of academic perspectives that either deny the existence of access problems in U.S. higher education or attempt to address them by means of policy that will at best change things on the surface, there are, according to Peter Sacks<sup>39</sup>, also “a growing number of scholars and journalists [who] are beginning to note the disturbing trends”

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<sup>39</sup> Sacks, Peter. „How Colleges Perpetuate Inequality“. *Chronicle of Higher Education*. 53.19 (2007).

(1). His own research is supplemented and supported by critical news reports on elite admission processes that reiterates what “educational researchers have long understood” (2):

[A]dmissions-test scores correlate closely with parental income and education, making them a reflection of the cultural and educational capital that children acquire from families and schools (2).

Therefore, the instruments that are supposed to create a fair and equal access system by assessing each individual in a standardized manner are proven to perpetuate the systemic exclusion of socioeconomically disadvantaged students. The motivation behind maintaining this system is self-interest and the need to “maximize [...] endowments” (Sacks 2) that in turn “derive from [...] reputation and prestige” (Sacks 2) of the institution.

Standardized testing is a highly debated topic within higher education and educational research in general as it has been found to be “the poorest predictor of college performance when compared with high-school grades and the SAT II subject test” (Sacks 4). Even though admission is based upon many other factors beside test scores, they do influence diversity on campuses negatively because the “definitions of merit and [...] prestige-driven enrollment-management practices produce” (Sacks 4) expectations that cannot be met by students who were not fortunate enough to have the best circumstances on their side.

Feasible, realistic suggestions for change are rare in the field because researchers are aware that higher education is dictated by economic powers that are much more influential than educational research. However, the attention needs to be on the fact that U.S. American higher education is an “exclusionary system” that “will lead to unfortunate economic consequences for the entire nation” (Sacks 3) if it continues to draw a dividing line between sections of society that are merely based on socioeconomic status and class.

In his study, Daniel W. Rossides<sup>40</sup> argues that higher education can only develop into a truly open and accessible system “if there are drastic improvements in the life circumstances of America’s lower classes” (668). He thereby supports and acknowledges my claim that universal access to U.S. American higher education is a goal that is attainable if the focus shifts from institutional policy to an approach that includes sociological, educational and cultural studies perspectives.

## **6. Conclusion**

I have approached my analysis from both an empirical and a text based level to determine whether universal access, defined as equal opportunity for higher education, is in fact a reality today. Although respected voices of the field argue that access to higher education in the U.S. is free and equally attainable for everyone, my research finds otherwise. The chances to participate successfully in higher education are determined by a multitude of factors of which only one is individual motivation and determination. The bigger part is found in the quality of preparatory education that is in turn dependent on factors such as socioeconomic background.

The educational and sociological data presented in chapter four give proof to the imbalance in higher education attendance and degree-completion between majority and minority sections of society. The expert interviews attest to that reality and take the issue beyond St. Louis to a national level. My interview partners’ similar concerns and observations about contemporary trends in higher education are validated by the key texts in chapter five. In addition, I exposed some common counter arguments to be unfounded or circular but in any case inconclusive.

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<sup>40</sup> Rossides, Daniel W. “Knee-Jerk Formalism: Reforming American Education”. *The Journal of Higher Education* 75.6 (2004): 667-703.

My underlying cultural studies perspective guided this inquiry in a direction that attempts to identify the core cultural problems behind individual points of discussion in the field. I was able to show how those aspects are rooted in the wrongful assumption that all students have the same chances once they apply to college. All the presented data and a variety of researchers support my conclusion that universal access is not a reality in U.S. American higher education today, and it will not be until mythical cultural beliefs like the classlessness of society are challenged and debated on the basis of empirical facts.

The American Dream as a founding cultural concept is unique to U.S. American society, and it continues to permeate various academic fields as well as higher education debates. The belief in the human ability to overcome seemingly defeating obstacles is undoubtedly one of the strongest motivators, and it has enabled countless disadvantaged individuals to follow their ambitions. I also agree that it is every individual's right to foster, develop and finally reach his or her potential in order to become a responsible and contributing member of society.

However, with regard to higher education research, I conclude that the belief in the American Dream distracts from the undeniable facts that expose it to be non-existing. The situation today is in need of further research and subsequent fundamental, cultural changes so that the American Dream of higher education becomes a reality for everyone instead of the selected few.



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## 9. Appendix

### **Dr. H., Department Chair of Education, Institution X.**

#### What is your field of research?

Yes, my field is within the field of teacher education which is what I focused on since I received my Doctorate. Within that, it is partnerships with schools what I focus on. It's an attempt to take teacher education and make it more of a clinical practice. The analogy is made to medical education. You have teaching hospitals that are connecting to a university. What we've been developing in America are professional developing schools that are connected to a university, but they are regular functioning public schools. The idea is that both the university faculty are involved with the school in various ways and it is also a place that our students experience practice in. So that has been a focus of my research over the last 15 years or so ago. The last ten years has really been the close focus. Being a dean, I haven't had as much opportunity to do research as I used to when I was a professor. My dissertation was not on that. It was on 'Integrated Curriculum in Elementary Schools and Conceptions of Knowledge' that students developed by a different approach to the curriculum. So it was school based research but it wasn't so much the connection with the university.

#### At this point, do you advise any thesis or dissertations?

No, I don't. I actually finished one from my last – I've only been here two years – institution in Pennsylvania where I was a dean for five years. I was at a college in Georgia 10 years before that and that's where my higher ed career began because I actually taught elementary school 18 years before going into higher ed. So it's somehow two careers. So I just finished advising a dissertation, probably about four or five months ago that had been left over from that last place. We do have a doctoral program here, but it's a very different approach. They don't write a dissertation, they do a project that is focused on school change. It's advised by the educational leadership faculty which is not my expertise.

#### As to your job description, how often do you participate in conferences, any kind of higher ed meetings? Is that something common here?

Yes, and I could do more if I wanted to. The ones I tend to go to at this point are related to my professional organization AACTE (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education) and it is a group made up of deans and department chairs. It involves faculty, but that's the focus. There is a state organization, MAACTE, so I attend two state meeting and a national meeting a year but I'm also appointed to one of the committees for the national organization, so I attend that. So that is one area. The other area is The National Network for Educational Renewal, which are 25 school-university partnerships around the country started by John Goodlad who is a theorist in education. They have annual meeting where I go to along with quite a few of my faculty. It's been a while since I've been to AERA. I'm still a member of that and enjoy the publications, but haven't been to one of the meeting in a number of years. I still have connections with some of the people who are involved.

Do you find that people here at X. take up these opportunities more in comparison to other institutions that you have been at? Or less?

Probably a little bit less. The institution in Georgia had more of a traditional research expectation for faculty, so there was more emphasis there on publication in referee journals as part of the expectation of what scholarship meant. I was more active in going to conferences there and I was at a professor who had gone through the tenure process. I was also involved in a number of other associations (science teacher, social studies teacher) and areas I was involved in at that point. Here they've broadened the definition of scholarship and I don't know if you've read any of the Boyer work...he is with the Carnegie...whatever it's called. He redefined scholarship in terms of four different types: the scholarship of discovery, which is the traditional type we think of in terms of coming up with new knowledge and publishing that in referee journals. But he also had the scholarship of application which is more applying existing knowledge in new or other situations. The scholarship of integration which is taking various types of knowledge and bringing it together in new ways. And the scholarship of teaching and learning, which is looking at the teaching process and – even in higher education - looking at it in terms of how professors teach and how they can improve their practice. So X., about 6 or 7 years ago, took on this approach and structured their scholarship expectations around it and allow for that broader sense. Right now with the leadership of our current vice president of academic affairs, she has really invigorated a center for teaching and learning that has college faculty focusing on developing and researching their own teaching and learning practice. There are 30 to 35 faculty now who are studying their own practice formally in study groups and publishing based on that.

What administrative, non-academic functions do you regularly perform?

There are a number of pieces. One is the external piece with two parts. One is 'How do I create partnerships with external groups?' and for me that is very specifically the schools. That means working with school leaders, having a presence at local meetings of school leaders, making formal partnerships with schools as well as with other universities. The other piece is fundraising. Besides seeking grants which X. doesn't have much of a support system for that so it falls more on the dean. It's seeking both public and private funding. I've been somewhat successful and I have a couple of projects lined up. The internal piece: deans attend a lot of meetings and some of them are across campus in terms of meeting with various groups on regular or sporadic bases that are related to running the university. It's regular meeting with deans' council and a larger council that includes the deans and various directors of non-academic units. There are various committees that have to do with adult programming. There is a recent meeting with the president on transforming into a residential campus. We try to get more students to live on campus and get the 'total' college experience. That was a meeting where we were talking of academic as well as non-academic in terms of services on campus. Other administrative things, well budget – I oversee the budget for the school. We have five or six spate budgets that are ongoing budgets. Another five or six are grant related budgets that are left over from old or ongoing grants. I oversee that and approve all monetary requests. Personnel are a big piece in terms of my working with faculty. There are some in the tenure process and they have to be evaluated and observed. All of the faculty come to a yearly meeting with their goal, their scholarship, their student evaluations and we talk about areas of continued growth. And then the other thing is students. I get regular visits from students who have problems. Usually I'm not that involved until they've gone through the process of trying to work it out with their

professor. We also have a student dean who is involved early on and then I become the second level and if I can't solve it, it goes to the vice president of academic affairs.

When you look at your time that you spend performing administrative functions, how much of your time is allocated to these functions in comparison to your academic work?

Sometimes it is hard to separate it out, because there is academic work for the university and academic work for my school. I would say that probably three quarters (3/4) of my time is non-academic. We had to go through and say what percent of time we spent in each category. It was hard and if I look at it right now it would be different than a year ago when I did it. This summer, I'm spending 7/8 of my time on accreditation.

When you talk about administrative functions, are all these in your dean job description?

A lot of them are. It's a pretty long document and there might even be stuff in it that I don't think about too much.

Is additional work outside of this description expected?

Well, I'm expected to do everything necessary for the school to be successful. In a private institution in particular an important part of that is enrollment and economics. Besides running a good program I also have to make sure that our enrollments continue to be healthy and to grow; especially because that is a direction of the new president. What I have to do varies based on who the president is and who the vice president for academic affairs is – that is my direct boss. We have a new president who started a year ago and he has clearly said that he wants the university to grow and he also wants it to become more residential. Whatever I need to do, I do. Part of what I've had to push for is marketing, because sometimes I have to go out there and figure out to sell our programs and push other offices.

In terms of representation: On what occasions do you present the university or your department? Generally I represent both the university and the School of Education in meetings that involve other schools of education and that happens on a fairly regular basis. I can think of one last week. One of the organizations brought in a speaker and invited the deans along with superintendents of the district and community organization leaders. I was there person for X. and as such I represent X. and the School of Education. One of the things I do to help getting our name out is that I agreed to co-sponsor events on campus for school districts. I let them use our facilities and whenever that happens I go in and give a welcome for the university.

When we talk about the university as an educational institution, why do you think it is people enroll in B.A. programs? What do you think is their motivation?

At this point in American society you pretty much need a B.A. to get a good paying job of any sort. I think for many families it is just expected that you go right from high school to the B.A. and that's what you need to succeed. As a matter of fact the speaker from last week said – and I don't know if I get those figures right – that in 1967 when he and I graduated high school something like 70% of jobs were low skilled jobs. They didn't require a college education. That is down to 17% now. I think it's just an expected piece. Nowadays the emphasis is very much a career focus. People go to college because it will help them to get a job. A lot of them come in with a fairly clear sense of what career they want to go into. I think that is a bit of a difference what I call the 'heady' late 60s/early 70s where there was an emphasis on trying out different



things – I changed majors three times. Of course the economy was in better shape too, but I don't see that as much now.

When you think of a person holding a B.A. from X., how would you describe that person?

Well, there are two answers to that. There is what I would hope and there is what exists. Because I would hope that there would indeed be a critical thinker, socially responsible – have that sense that there are responsible for not just their own career and family but society and those less fortunate - , contribute in some way in their career to the common good, come out knowledgeable about not necessarily the facts and minutia of their education, but a thinking approach and an ability to find information when they need to find it, that they are ready to jump into the work force while continuing to be learners. That's another thing that's really changed in their last 30 years. Whatever their position or job is when they graduate, in five years it will be very different, both in terms of how jobs are changing but also in terms of how people move from job to job. The reality is that students are sometimes more native, coming from sheltered environments. A lot of our students come in with a professional focus: this is what I'm coming for, this is what I want to learn and I'm not really interested in that other stuff. I think it's another difference between the U.S. and the EU system, the whole general education and liberal arts education piece which we really try to convince our students of. 'You're being educated as a citizen, not only as a professional.' That is a little bit of a struggle and we do get our share of students who come out prepared as professionals but not as prepared as active citizens. And it's something that is shared across campus. People are thinking of how to change our practices to allow people to see the importance of being a well rounded person.

In what ways is a B.A. different to holding an M.A. or Ph.D.?

The B.A. is indeed the one degree that has this broader sense, this sense that you get a broad foundation as well as a professional direction but it really is a professional direction. To me it is the M.A. and Ph.D. that develop the depth and the professional knowledge. It is also knowledge that I believe should be tied to practice, whereas much of undergraduate education is both theoretical and idealistic. Much of undergrad ed is focused on the implications of practice and how to change existing practice in terms of what you are learning.

If I freely assert that are two functions of the B.A.: Culturation and qualification. What do you tie to the B.A., M.A. and Ph.D.?

That is interesting because enculturation is an interesting term. Well because there are different approaches to enculturation: one is that you become part of a culture, but the other is to understand culture in a critical way. Well, the B.A. has become more and more an equal combination of both of those. That is a change we have seen in the last 30 years. 30 years ago the focus has really been on enculturation whereas now it has become more focused on qualification, although I think it is still balances. My last position was at a state school, so there was still this emphasis on the liberal arts and the broad foundation on which the professional knowledge is based. So I really see it as a balance in the B.A.: the broad foundation and the professional qualification built on that. The M.A. and the doctorate, the enculturation is not into the culture as a whole but a specific profession. It is also hard for me to know that across fields, but certainly in education the enculturation in the M.A. is much more to the teaching profession and the qualifications that go along with it – it's not an enculturation to the American culture, but the teaching profession. In the doctorate, the enculturation is to the university world so that you

come out – in fact, I have an article that I wrote about this topic. In a way, the Ph.D. ruins you for your professional career in a way that – I don't know how to say this. The fact that you become too thoughtful – this doesn't sound very good, but I think it's true – about your day to day practice. Sometimes it can freeze you in terms of your ability to go with the flow of your day to day practice, because you've become a very critical consumer of your profession. And in a way that is the idea of becoming a university professor. You're supposed to be able to bring this reflective stance to the profession that makes it hard then to step back into the profession. You are kind of looking at yourself from the outside while you are in your profession.

What differences, if any, do you observe in students that are enrolled in a B.A.?

They are very naïve and young when they begin – young in our society. In terms of personality they very much become set. They find their inner strength, their voice in a lot of ways and in the end they come out with a stronger sense of who they are, where they're going, how they can make a difference. Intellectually I think it's real blossoming time, especially given the state of high schools in this country. People are either involved in something totally different than academics or bored by the academics they are involved in. They are not challenged and it's a very narrow box. I think students come out with a very different sense – that is certainly my hope, that there is something that really turns them on in terms of intellectual growth. Hopefully they want to continue. Not all of them get that spark, but some of them

When you look at students in B.A. degrees and you compare freshmen today with those five, ten etc years ago – do you see a difference, any difference, between the people that enroll?

Well, the pool has gotten a lot larger and so has the K-12 educational system in terms of trying to prepare people for university. I think there are two English issues that seem to come up. We get a lot of students who are not readers – they know how to read but they don't pick up books on their own. They read what they need to read, but they don't read for pleasure. You ask them about the last book they are reading and it's very hard for them to answer that. You ask them about the TV show they watched last night and it's easy for them to answer. It's not part of who they are. It's part of what they need to do for their professional career. The same is true for writing. They write for their profession, but they don't play with writing. They don't see writing as something that is somewhat natural. Both of that are things that have changed over the years and gotten worse. To a degree that is the direction that the public schools have gone in terms of a focus on skills as opposed to really depth of knowledge.

I have a quote for you and I'd like you to comment on it if you'd like. In one of the books about the history of higher education, by Veysey, it says: With culture as an end, university has no business. What do you think about that?

I would disagree with it, because I think the purpose of the university is indeed to influence culture. How good of a job it's doing is another story, but I think its purpose is indeed to continually examine and explore culture and try to broaden students' understanding of culture and their place in it. I probably see this most – especially when I think back to my experience in Georgia, the college I taught at in Georgia was officially a Christian institution that was non-denominational, so it wasn't connected to one church. We had a lot of students who came in with this very narrow sense of what the world was and, in a way, what culture was because they came from very religious households where that had been narrowed because of the religious perspective. I saw a lot of those students change over time, because even calling itself a Christian

institution, the professors continued to see their role as challenging students' understandings of what the society, the culture was; have them question – not necessarily to leave religion, but broaden their understanding. So I see that the university does have a role in preparing students to question what goes on around them in the culture and by that then make an impact in changing and moving that culture onward. I think that is the business of the university at large: to change culture. I think it's challenged more and more by this professionalism, the more and more emphasis on professions that has come about over time. Although I would see that as a natural evolution, that college has become an expectation, as part of that broadening you are going to get that emphasis on preparation for professions. It's how we balance those two, going back to your earlier one to enculturation and qualification. That becomes a key question for me.

The university in America – and please do correct me if I'm wrong – is seen as or can be viewed as a type of community in itself. In what areas does your university constitute itself as a community?

Well, you do create this island sense – it goes along with that ivory tower expressions – and we really are somewhat on an island, surrounded by these big office buildings. Once you go past them you have the island the students exist in and the university more so wants to push the idea of this being a separate community where people are both interacting with each other and interacting with ideas. That is something that is different than outside the walls of the university. So setting that sense of community becomes a very important goal for what the university leaders try to do. Part of that is in order to question culture you need to create this sense of safety that comes from community; that there is a group of people doing similar things together. At the same time it is a community that has to keep trying to be very tied to the outside communities because that's where we want to make an impact.

In how far is the campus, as such, a place for people to come together? In how far does the campus provide a space for this community you talked about?

I think it's something they continue to try to do through the creation of things like student interest groups. There are all types of student groups that form through things like our university seminar that all our freshmen take that really attempts to create this sense of community and also evolves around ideas. So it's not just community but community and academics. By having people live on campus, you try to create the sense of this being a place where you want to be. It's an interesting challenge, because the majority of our students still don't live on campus. It's about how you have them see the university as some place beyond just where you drive in, take a class and drive off. That's still a big challenge, also because in my own school here I'm focused on preparing teachers so lots of our students' focus is on how much time they spend in schools which they spend a lot of as opposed to the time they spend on campus. But the flipside is that we do a lot in courses, have them work in groups, have them see that even a profession is a community and not individual work.

How do you feel about a national identity of higher education in the U.S.? Do you feel there is such a thing as national American higher education?

Yes I do. Even though there is such a humongous diversity in higher ed, just within St. Louis there is amazing diversity. You look at XIII. and we don't even have a state research institution in town. But there are so many things that we share, I think. We all share this basis in liberal arts. We all share this sense of the importance of teaching and the importance of scholarship. You

may say that XIII. has its share of people who don't focus on teaching but instead focus on scholarship, but it's always a matter of degree. A place like XIII. doesn't focus as much on undergrad even though they have a huge undergrad program – and I'm sure in some ways they are trying to focus on it. So I think there is a lot more that we share than that we don't share. I think in the media and the American consciousness it's still seen as your university so you are part of this big group, collaboration of some sort which does happen as well when you go to national meetings. When I go to AACTE I interact with people from all sorts of different universities, so I really don't see differences emphasized very much when it comes to that sense. I sense that there is a clear sense that university is university no matter if you are at XIII. or University of Wisconsin or wherever.

You referred to St. Louis and I did my homework on St. Louis and I want to hit you with some statistics if that is ok. And I also want to give you some background to make clear that this comes from a place of different cultures and not from a place of attack of some kind. I am very aware this is different here. Where I come from, Vienna, downtown automatically connotes rich people, upper class, upper 10%. The further you go in what you call the county, less so. I'm aware that here it's the other way round, to a degree. I looked up some statistics and I found that the largest minority in St. Louis are African Americans and they constitute 30% of St. Louis population – city and county combined. Yet, 80% of MO students are white – higher ed students. And I'm asking myself how is that possible? How can 30% of a minority not be represented in higher education? I wonder why that is. Do you have any idea?

Yes, I know why it is. It's comes from two things: economics and racism. Economics in terms of we are a meritocracy in terms of higher education, so the philosophy has been that you earn higher ed based on intelligence and the work you put into it. Which is similar in Europe, maybe even more so. There's a smaller percentage that goes to university in Europe than in America, is that true? [...] I think people have identified this as a national problem, that the cost of higher ed has gone through the roof. The last school I was at was a state school, so whereas fifteen years ago they were 60-70% funded by the state, now it's 30% with the rest being tuition. So the state school is only 30% funded by the state. So the state has really abrogated its responsibility of educating in higher ed. At the same time, higher ed has become more and more important. It's even part of the presidential campaign, you know, tuition and student loans. Students walk out of higher with gigantic debt unless you come from upper middle or upper class families; you are going to walk out of university with debt which hangs over your head as you try to get into a profession. That also adds to that pressure at the beginning to focus on professions as opposed to liberal education. So there's the whole economic...and then what it does it discriminates terribly against those who are poor. Despite the aid programs that exist for people in poverty, they are nowhere near what should exist. If you ask Harvard, they will provide all the need based aid, but that's Harvard. They are richer than most countries in the world. X. can't do that. We don't have the money. We depend on tuition. So we're not able to serve poor students here anywhere near what I and others would like. So then you take poverty and the African American situation in America which has evolved to a place where you have generational poverty as opposed to situational poverty. This is poverty that generation after generation, and breaking out of it is very much the exception than the norm. It's only the exceptional student who is able to break out of that and who finds an opportunity to get higher education. You have tremendous drop out rates in the city high schools. One of our professional development schools is a large urban high school, Roosevelt High School, and the situation is very difficult. Students don't come to class.

When they do come, they come to sleep to make up for the fact that they can't sleep in their own homes. Or they just come with all of the cultural negatives that go along with being raced in poverty and extreme poverty for a lot of them. They come to school to get their free lunch. We do not have the state welfare system in America that exists in Europe. And the problem is that changing all of that – because I work so much with the K12 school system – the schools can only do so much. It's not a matter of preparation; I mean it's some of it. Certainly it's some of it and it's one route to escape from poverty is education and it happens. But schools can't do it alone, you're talking about an economic system, a social welfare system that has to exist. One of the problems of the white flight from the cities that occurred across the country in the 60s and 70s was that the white people left the city and said 'I'm not gonna pay for it, I'm not gonna deal with it'. That is coming back to hunt them now. It's interesting to see the gentrification that's happening now. As middle class people move back into the city, take over neighborhoods, improve them, kick out the poor people who are living there, so that now you have the inner city, the outer ring suburbs that are becoming more and more people of color in poverty, then there's the outer ring and the exurbs. For us, that's St. Charles County. Actually, where the rich people live in St. Louis – it's very interesting – they don't live in St. Charles. You go there if you want an affordable house. The rich people live in Clayton and Ladue, these inner suburbs that have remained [...] away basically by economics.

There are current concerns that I've picked up from key texts and you've mentioned so many of them already. It is interesting that still many people in their texts assert that the American system is an all access system. I was wondering what your comment to that would be.

No, I don't think it is. I think it would like to be, but I think it's the great challenge that we see this already in high schools, especially urban high schools; the whole question of can we really prepare all students for college; should all students go into college or should there be more of a European system where you do have rigorous crafts and professional options that are valued. At the same time, the great American dream is that everybody should be able to become president. Everybody should have that access. As soon as you start saying urban high schools are dealing with this, really what you are saying is black people aren't smart enough to go to college. The racial issues, the issues of poverty and the issues of school systems all come together and it becomes hard to separate them out. We deal with the same problem here, because in St. Louis city we have a number of programs that skim off the better students in high schools. One of them being 'The voluntary transfer program', which allows St. Louis city kids to go to school in STL county, up to 10% of them. They qualify by lottery, by choice. So you could say it's open access, except for the fact that the parents who will make that choice are already those whose lives are together enough so that they can be making that choice. And that's the same with Charter Schools and Magnet Schools, so the schools that are like the high school we deal with have the kids that are left over. They are the ones where parents' circumstances make it so that they are just trying to live and they can't even think about how to get my kid further ahead. So I think that's the ultimate way in which we are not an all access system. To say we are all access assumes that equality can happen despite economics and that's one of the great American fallacies that all people are equal. It's written in our laws, but when it comes to economics, everybody is on their own and there's no safety net. If at some point we can get the vision to put together a safety net – which has been tried at various times. Jonson's war on poverty was an attempt to get some type of safety net in place.

I read this in an article: America is the only country with a classless society. So I was wondering, if America was a classless society, would you then not have 30% of black students in St. Louis universities?

I don't think America is classless. I think America likes to think it's classless. America is not classless, what America is that class is not based on your birth, but on your economic situation. The story of America – in theory – is the story of people who have come in as underclass and ended up as middle and upper class. That's the great immigrant story, it works for the immigrants, it just doesn't work for the generational poverty problem which is both African American and Hispanic, to a large extent. I'm an example of, in a way, the classless society, if you can say that. My grandparents came from Eastern Europe from very poor situations. They came to America with nothing. I struggled. My mother went through periods when they didn't have enough to eat in the house, when she was growing up. My father manages to start a restaurant and ran it his whole life. He was able to put all his kids through college and they are now middle class. That is how we are classless: the ability to transcend class is possible and that's true not matter what your race is. We've discriminated against various groups through history but there is also a history of moving beyond that and we see that in various places even with African Americans. There are enclaves of middle class African American in the St. Louis area who are doing very well. But that doesn't mean we don't have classes because we definitely do.

I have two more somewhat specific questions: Research seems to suggest that there is no relation between the score on admission tests and the score on these admission tests. How come there are still admission test around? To make it more precise: What is your opinion or your take on admission testing as a system?

That's an interesting one, because I've heard the opposite; that there is a correlation between admission tests and grades in colleges, even though I don't know how far that goes. It was just a study that came out on the changes on the SATs showing correlation for the new writing portion more than for the other parts. That makes sense to me, because taking standardized tests – some people are good at it and some people are not. That's something that I've dealt with in teacher education for a long time, because our students have to pass a number of standardized tests through their program as well besides making it in here. The system I think tries to balance the fact that we're trying to judge this mass of students and figure out who is going to be successful. If we base it only on high school performance it doesn't give us the full picture because of the great variability in high schools. So there needs to be something else that allows us to cut across. Admission tests provide quick, easy, cheap way to do that. That's the bottom line: they are quick, easy and cheap. How effective they are is another story and that's why I think we see that writing may be able to provide more. We've just recently switched to requiring an admissions essay which has not been required before, but that is a lot more work intensive for us. So as is true for so much of testing that's right now happening in America, what's cheap and easy is not necessarily what's effective and what gives you the whole picture. It's a cheap and easy snapshot, but I don't think it really doesn't correlate – certainly with success in life.

There have been numerous people asserting that there is a problem in higher ed as such. One is that university is not close enough to what society needs. It's this whole idea of university having a utility purpose and college 'must adapt to social ends'. We're not searching for any absolute

truth anymore; we are not searching for the person like an ontological idea of what the person is. We need people to succeed in the workforce etc. Would you agree with that idea?

No, I think we've come too far in that direction as it is because what we need more than anything else are people who can think critically, who can continue learning and adapt to change and lead that change. We really need deep and adaptive thinkers. In a way that has been the strength of America: its ability to innovate and to come up with great ideas. That doesn't necessarily derive from the school system as such, but that, to me, has to be the strength of the university – not to provide technicians, but to provide thinkers. We are already seeing that the rest of the world does a lot cheaper what we do on the technical side and it's the innovation, the thinking in different ways that has to be what universities push.

Well, that's the end of my questionnaire. Thank you for your time, I really appreciate it.

**Dr.P., Department Head of Education, Institution XIV.**

What is your field of research?

I am an educational psychologist so my faculty appointment is within the College of Education. And within the field of educational psychology my early research was on what teachers do to motivate learners in elementary, middle, high school. And so those questions about the kinds of interactions that contribute to student level are still the questions I'm still interested in but just at the university level. So as the director of the Center for Teaching and Learning, my energy goes toward helping faculty to understand what they can do to encourage students motivation and student engagement and learning. So if I write about anything it's more about what we've done at the Center of Teaching and Learning that help us be successful. So the direction has changed a lot.

At this point, do you advise any thesis or dissertations?

Yes, I do. So this woman I mentioned earlier whose daughter lives in New York and is dating this person in the Netherlands is working on a dissertation proposal. She'll be doing an evaluation study of a program that I've directed since its inception in 2001. She'll be doing a five year follow up of faculty on this and other campuses who participated in the program to learn how it affected them. What they are doing now, what they are doing differently as a result of participating in that program

I have student whose results chapter I am reading now. She is looking especially at faculty who teach counselors so it's people who go into school counseling, private and community counseling. So she is looking at how university students experience those courses as student centered. So those faculty did a premium and a focus on student learning or where they still traditionally putting focus on teaching. So she's analyzing that data now. She did not include practicum and internship experiences where you'd expect more focus on the learner who's developing skills. She was looking more at the didactic courses where students learn theories of counseling and strategies. One of the things she seems to finding is that it matters how long you've been teaching. These were mostly MA students suggesting that they find that the more experienced the teachers are, the more learner focused the class room is.

I don't do a lot but right now one student or two in different places a year is about all I can do on top of the other work I do.

How often do you have time to participate in annual meeting, conferences?

I make time but what's interesting is that I don't go to my disciplinary meetings anymore. When I moved into the office of academic affairs and started – I'm the founding director of this Center for Teaching and Learning – I continued to go to the meetings and picked up a whole new set of meetings. A few years into that, I realized I couldn't find any part of the meeting that was satisfying. I kept looking for what I was wanting to learn. They weren't focused on the kind of work I do in higher ed. So I just retreated. I get the journals and stay on some of the lists but I think I'm probably more identified now on campus as someone in higher ed and not educational psychology. But I continue to attend department meetings, I have an office there and I value it tremendously.



When you look at the time you spend working, how much of that is allocated to administrative work and how much do you do research of your own and academic reading and writing?

Not much, that's stolen time. It really is. I'm a co-author on a book that came out this spring and it was late evenings and weekends that allowed me to work on that. I've two chapters that I am working on now and it's pretty much the same thing. I had to just allocate weekends and really find myself working myself up against deadlines with a lot of pressure and trying to buy time. I don't have that kind of leisure time. I sit down at the computer and I could spend the whole day answering messages. But I don't do that. I can't do that. But I don't get that much time to get my head into my reading. It's embarrassing and I don't say that very much, but I read my students' result section in the morning when I dry my hair. Or taking the pages to the doctor's office when I have appointments so that no time is idle time.

Last night I left here at seven, had dinner with my husband and if I go back to the computer I go back to work which is what I did last night. So Wednesday night was a very unusual night. My husband is not very computer literate but he took over and I wrote bills, checks and put the TV on. So I watched TV for an hour which is something that never happens.

Do you also teach courses?

I teach one course in the fall semester. I teach on Monday evenings, it's a course for doctoral students. I have blocked off Monday to prepare for the class which is a gift to myself in some ways. I won't go to class unprepared and doing what I do I have to teach a damn good class. The expectation is: If she's teaching us how to teach, she better know how to herself. So I give it Monday. When I have papers it'll get weekend time and it's really really tough to give up that one day a week in the Fall term to teaching but I wouldn't not teach.

Since you're teaching doctoral students, the question might sound odd. What's your sense on the reason for people to enroll into a B.A. degree? What motivates people to say...to not be done after high school and keep going?

I think the cultural expectation in the US today is that you need a college degree. You need some post-secondary degree and while the trades have pretty amazing programs to train people to be carpenters and plumbers and laborers, people who work in construction – their programs are quite good. The expectation is that those jobs are fewer and fewer. To get ahead, one needs a college degree.

When you think of a B.A. degree, what do you think is different after people come out of it, aside from knowing content?

We'd like to think they have more content knowledge. We'd like to think that they are developing critical thinking skills and have the ability to analyze problems. At this campus there is a value placed on citizenship and understanding why it is important to contribute to society. I make the case for this campus and I think others will follow suit: this campus has a large commitment to the community, economic development, civic engagement, public university. And so I think we can say that something like 70 or 75 percent of people who graduate this university will stay in this region. So I say if we don't teach them how to take care of St. Louis, who is? That becomes our responsibility. To prepare them to...everybody is going to tell you critical thinking, problem solving, global awareness, that's present in some of our majors, not all. Citizenship, being civically engaged. So there's a well roundedness and a broadness of

understanding multiple perspectives and thinking reflectively rather than impulsively about a decision. Some programs are going to say that graduating senior knows how to be a member of a team and that's important in many disciplines. Employers today tell us that people need to know how to get along. This campus prides itself on collaboration with the community and there are many remarkable ones.

I think that value of collaboration is visible in some of our majors. So the XIV. system has a set of goals and values and then each campus will design a set of goals and values supposedly consistent with the broader campus. And then we look to the colleges to filter down those same concepts.

What I want to hypothesize in my paper is that university education fulfills two basic functions and I'm looking at the B.A., MA and Ph.D. leaving out professional programs, community college, two years and so on. These two functions are qualification in terms of content knowledge and skills and enculturation in terms of making people part of a maybe different set of values or enculturating them into a different section of society than in which they would stay in without the B.A.. To summarize: qualification are skills and enculturation is everything that changes a person from when they start a B.A. to the end, other than knowing more about psychology or whatever. What program performs which function more?

The Ph.D. clearly is set apart for its focus on research. Being able to do original research, apply, being able to use all those skills and tools you've got and the enculturation piece as well because you need to know in which context you're asking those questions, so that's kind of an easy conclusion for me to draw.

And I think that there's probably going to be some influence on the discipline to answer your question in other ways. So somebody graduating with a B.A. in criminology might be prepared to join a local police force in some way but with a M.A. that person is going to be much more marketable in a broader spectrum of applications. I think the discipline is going to matter.

Somebody with a B.A. in English and moving on to a M.A. of Fine Arts, it will take that person's creativity to figure out where the niche is to use this degree and some people do this beautifully. So I am amazed at some of our graduate seniors. One of the interesting things about this campus is that the average age of our graduates is 27 or 28 years old. So their experiences are going to be vaster and richer in some ways. There's a difference between graduating with 21 or 28 with a B.A. degree. And the professional schools, my colleagues don't have any problem answering these questions because people come in wanting to be nurses, teachers or optometrists but it's a little harder in some of the arts and sciences where not everyone...people go through biology or chemistry intending to go to graduate school.

The example you brought up about criminology is an interesting one. When you hold a B.A. and you go out into the workforce, what it means is not necessarily that you are trained as the greatest criminologist, but it says something about your development and about you sticking in their for four years to get your B.A.. People trust you more on the basis of getting one rather than on the basis of the skill set you acquired.

Let's take a couple of other fields. You graduate with a B.A. in psychology and to really use psychology you need to be in graduate school. You graduate with a B.A. in business and communication, and those students are getting jobs. They've had a semester long internship where they've been able to apply their skills. They've learned how to sell and marketed themselves

and they've created a niche as they've chosen an internship that allows them to use what they bring to that job. That's going to be your content and skills and qualifications, but there's a lot of personality in there too I would think. So I don't know, there's some interesting things going on about personalities and which ones chose what majors.

[...]

We don't have the controls and standards in place that are in place in Germany and Austria, so yes we know that. In a public university like this one freshmen come in with a wide range of skills so many of those general education classes are designed to help them become good thinkers, writers and communicators, help them acquire the skills they didn't come into college having, but surely each discipline is also lending its political world and its cultural world, it's modus operandi to it's B.A. students. Senior faculty do that to incoming junior faculty, it's almost parental. You can see in my image at times, but...and I'm not sure how healthy that is.

In the US we often talk of the disciplinary silos. The farm ...where you keep grain for the winter. If you use that silo metaphor and a lot of people do, disciplines don't talk to another. My discipline is the best one. I can tell you from my campus which disciplines are more open. And the message we send to all programs these days is that the future is going to be interdisciplinary study so we want to acknowledge that and we want to look for opportunities for those cross disciplinary partnerships, conversations, programs to develop and they're less likely to happen the tighter the silo is. So there's an interesting reality.

You referenced general education and students being brought to maybe just the same starting line to what they've experienced before. When you look back at the time you've taught, what changes if any have you experienced in the student body?

Well, I'm a firm believer in the power of expectations. So in the years I taught undergraduates and I would often teach two sections of an undergraduate class and the expectation was that they would rise to the occasion and learn to communicate well in writing, learn to apply some analytical skills to what it was we were studying. The challenge for the instructor is finding ways to challenge those who are already strong and those who are still developing in that directions. It's hard, but it certainly can be done. It takes more than one semester for a student to really gain the strengths that others might have had when the class began and people complain about that a lot around here, that there's so much variability among the students.

The way I learned to manage that challenge was to do a lot of work in pairs and small groups and teams, constantly finding new partners and switching groups and learning to assess one's own work, learning how to give a peer feedback, pairing up strong students with not so strong students and just being pretty forthright about that.

So if everyone does that, if there's a commitment among the faculty teaching our students, you're graduating a strong set of students who are learning about each other. So that's one fun thing about this heterogeneous student body. And we were talking about that today with a group of 15 first, second, third year faculty that although it's odd for an 18 or 19 year old student to be in class with a 30 or 40 year old parent returning to the work force, I think those traditionally aged college students are finding out pretty fast those are the good people to pair up with. Those are the people who are motivated, want to learn, are conscientious, so there can be some fabulous interactivity between these people in ways they are very productive. And this heterogeneity is more pronounced here than it is on many other campuses although people are saying, the

observers at the top, the way this campus looks today, the urban public university, is the future of universities in this nation. The student population will be moving the urban areas because that's where the jobs will be. Universities will have to learn what we are doing here. We're a young campus; we're just 45 years old.

When you think of – I'm sure you talk a lot with your peers, maybe nationally even – do you think there is a change in the typical student? Is it different today than it was 15 or 20 years ago?

Of course. Everyone's is talking about the millennials and it's a daunting challenge. We were talking about that at lunch. We are teaching social skills and it's a hard message for faculty to get because they don't...well, faculty are pretty much are mature and in graduate school prepared to be researchers and not to be teachers. So we have this challenge of helping them teach well, giving them support to teach well and then enculturating them into the reality that we are not just conveying content knowledge but we are teaching learners how to learn.

That made for an interesting conversation at lunch and it allowed me to hear how beginning faculty play with that reality. So a simple social skill like a knock on this door from one of my graduate assistants who expects me to stop what I'm doing and be responsive to his or her need right now. And that's been a frustration for our administrative assistant and I said we're going to have to teach them to say "Is this a good time?", "May I have five minutes of your time?", "When can I come back and talk to you about ...?"

So there are some social skills that have to be taught that this generation of wanting it on their time, when they want it, want it now. They bring with them, they challenge most faculty because they come in as consumers to the classroom and they are not consumers to the classroom and it's hard to juggle that.

This is a concern of each and every interview has brought up that they feel that there's a sense of entitlement that students picked up in the 80s or whenever they started.

Or I can find myself just exchanging e-mails so fast with a student realizing that it's almost we are instant messaging one another and I'm thinking that I don't want to send this message of availability that I will sit here and do this with this person all day. There are other ways to community.

But I do a fabulous workshop on classroom civility where people get to practice dealing with some of these student behaviors and it's pretty popular.

So yes, the millennials are here, they are very tech savvy. They've not known the world any other way. You are probably in that generation yourself. So that is a different student and so all the more reason in a place like this to take advantage of this heterogeneity, the non-traditional coming back or coming to campus maybe for the first time at your age because they want to learn. It's different than an 18 or 19 year old whose gotten the message that I better get a college education but they can't tell you why and their motivation is not quite there yet. So the faculty member then becomes not just teaching the content knowledge, so what you lump together under qualification as content knowledge and skills, I separate completely. We have to teach many of these skills while we teach the content knowledge. But it's not just the skills of how to do research. It may be the skills of how to communicate orally or in writing or how to study, how to take notes in class. These are things that faculty have to teach their students and integrate into their world of word.

When you look at your campus, I realize that it's such a unique campus in my selection because it doesn't provide – or maybe it does and I'm not aware of it – this typical dorm room, athletics. I spend my day at XIII. today: being the XIII. man or woman. It seems different because the student body is so different. So my question to you is: In what areas does this particular university establish a sense of community and culture?

We're working on it and I think we're doing better and better. Part of it is confronting that we haven't had that and part of that is youthfulness too. Originally we weren't allowed to have student live on campus, so we've gradually increased the number of students who do that. So in order for that experience to be that college experience, we have to create a life for those students. So if you'd seen the homecoming parade yesterday, you'd have gotten a kick out of it. It just grows every year, gets better, is very home grown and kind of fun, but it depends on the people that you hire to work in those offices.

So students who want the experience and we encourage it: being part of a student organization, we talk about why that is good for their resume appearance. There are lot of organizations who support majors. We may have more students doing that than athletics. Our athletic teams exist. They're not playing football. We like to say we never lost a game in 45 years. Well, we don't have a team. But we have basketball, tennis and volleyball where students have really strong experiences

So when you're coming you have to figure out where you can find an identity and create a niche that works for you. For some it's athletics, for some its student organizations and there is a lot of support in recent years. Our student center made a huge different. To create a place for students to congregate, for them to accomplish what they need to in terms of taking care of business on campus, having places to study, eat, congregate and meet. It's a focal point now and you start to feel community there. It's kind of neat to be there at eight or nine in the morning when classes are changing and the place is busy. It's a good thing. So it's a different kind of campus and the hope is that if you want the traditional college experience you can get it. It means putting a lot into it but you can get it.

So we have an honors college that in many ways tries to function as a small four year college within this big university. It's self contained, it's in a gracious old building, it's castle like. Looks more like the buildings at XIII. than these brick ones. They pride themselves in creating a small community, mostly traditionally age students who are working together in small classes and do things together in organizations and things like that. So there are lots of disciplinary organizations that are sprouting up.

But the majority of students do community so our challenge is: How do we keep them here for more than a class. It's a challenge for faculty. Because in order to have a good academic experience it makes sense to hang around and talk to your fellow students and your professors.

[research: people on campus much higher outcome]

When you look at the students that make up this campus, I realize it's not typical. I looked at the numbers and found that the largest minority in St. Louis are African American are 30%, city and county. No university reflects that number, not even close. So I'm thinking: there's something odd here.

Our percentage is 16 and 17 percent and we are the highest in the state. In the state! All campuses!

So I wonder how that is. African American students are not less interested or less capable, but for some reasons they are not there.

That is a very complex question so it demands a very complex response and it's a question that's loaded with that cultural context answer reigning issues of inequities and injustices and harsh economic realities so it's something that this city and the U.S. in general should...it should be moving us to do more.

I think you'll find that there are efforts on campuses around the nation to create those opportunities. We run one called the Bridge Program that is designed to do just that. That's designed to support students through their high schools years with workshops, bringing them to campus on Saturdays so that going to XIV. is a part of what they do and the reality is painted that they should end up at a college. Post high school, you go to college.

There are summer programs for students who are admitted provisionally and they are supported over the summer in some key History and English classes and if they make the grade they are admitted for the fall semester. Student success seminars are offered to freshmen students whose grade points are not very strong so that they learn some of these skills. How to take notes etc.

I was invited to speak to one of those classes a few weeks ago. From what I now, they run out of the student affairs side of the university. That may not be wise but that is what it is. They are taught jointly, each class is taught by a man and a woman by the division of student affairs. So they asked me to come in and talk about what faculty expect of successful students. So now each time I see those two people one of whom is someone who has got huge responsibility, directorship of the residence halls and the other is associate director of student life. They both say that when they meet with the classes, the students are constantly reminding themselves what I had to say. You know, they are sitting in front because "Dr. Cohen said it was the best place to sit". They are asking questions because "Dr. Cohen said it was important to interact with one another".

Maybe they've created a group of people who want to be successful here and that's what this seminar is about. I just wish more of the classes would invite me in. Just an outsider coming in to send a message that might be hard to hear. There are efforts designed to help the students and it takes really going out of your way. We have got an office of multicultural relation that is designed to support the students. Anyone can use that office. Their office on minority students, creating a home on campus for students to come and study, get study help, talk to a counselor, or just a place to go and have lunch. But a comfortable place for people of color where they can come and be comfortable. And there's a lost of programming on this campus and probably every campus related to issues of diversity, to confront them.

I talked to the director of admissions at XII. and he said they don't have problems getting minority students but keeping them. What he said was so fascinating because it touches on what my sense is. He makes his freshmen writing papers and by the fifth week people share their experiences more openly. There was this kid from north St. Louis...[...]. The experience of not being part of it was so back that he lost that student. [...] The social experience in the first year is so dividing. [...]

I am on the board of directors of a non profit organization that brings a group of high school students together from the middle of their junior to their senior year so they are together for a calendar year. Half of them are black and half of them are Jewish. They spend the year together exploring one another's history and ethnicities and backgrounds and understanding what they

have in common historically. The goal of the program is to teach them to confront injustice, racism, inequity and help them to acquire the skills they need to recognize, confront, work for change.

So we're in our fifth year. One of the kids who participated I guess a year ago...and there have been all sorts of stories and I try to keep track of those here at XIV., but they don't really want me to. But one of the students is somebody who I heard say that she was beginning her senior year that she wanted to go to cosmetology school. She wanted to learn how to be a hairdresser and over the next year the experience with the group, with the college focus group helped her make a decision to come here. For her, it's a huge culture change and she is struggling.

Another young man, maybe he was in that class too...One of the things they'd been encouraged to do was to go to one another's school. Picture a bright, personable, energetic, smiling high school junior from the St. Louis city public school, black, going out to West county to a private, small, independent school and vice versa. When you get these boys together and describing their experiences, it was pretty phenomenal. Just the black kid from the city going out to the private school panicked when he saw the backpacks. The kids out there would just drop them in the hall and they'd be there when they came for them because you couldn't do that at his school. And the kid from the county was shocked that he had to go through the metal security system to go into the school. He was greeted at the door with someone saying: "There's only one white kid who goes to this school and you're not that white kid. Go away." So they got a lot attention and they wrote about it. The student from the city didn't think he would go to college and with help with one of the people affiliated with the organization; he is in a program at Brandice University that creates almost a bridge year for smart able kids. And he sent us his journal. Daily reflections and I've read a little bit. He's only been there four weeks, but he's working hard. What an opportunity that is!

But these stories make the point that when I look at these numbers it is really not a racial discrimination...

...oh yeah, it's economic! Well, and in this city we do live – it would be nice to say it's not racial but it's a big part of it – in neighborhoods, we cloister ourselves, we live in neighborhoods where there's not a lot diversity. We're still figuring out how to live together and create opportunities and privileges for everyone because everyone doesn't have it. So that does speak to the issue of minority kids and why they are not in college and why these cycles of poverty are continued.

Culturally marked and unmarked [...], child care center

And that is the goal of this organizations to create those experiences more often. If more people from the majority cultural would have that experience, we might move society a little quicker.

So this leads me to this claim that I read a lot in the literature that the American higher education system is an all access system meaning that everybody who is smart enough and willing can go to college. In a sense, it's living the American dream in an educational system. And I read an article by a person working against this money issues. He argues that there are loans out there, you can borrow all the money you need. If you need to pay your way through a BA or M.A., there are lots of loans left and right and if you don't it's your own fault. My question to you is: Do you believe it is a universal access system?

Boy, I don't know. I probably want to read and think a little bit more about that. St. Louis is not the only city where there's a large population of young people who may not see that college is a possibility. So it's theoretical really that providing you are prepared, that there will be a college for you. There are campuses where test scores aren't necessary. You don't have to show your qualifications in order to get admitted. So it's very different from the European model where everyone knows that there is a path for me and I'll know what that path is once I finish secondary school. I'll know if I'm slated for university or if technical school is more for me.

Well, whether you know or not, it's a decision that encompasses a lot less. You go to university, pay 400 dollars, try a couple of lectures and then you stick with it or you don't. Access at home is not really an issue because every who has a degree can go. It's much more an issue of perseverance, because you're sitting in a hall with 450 other people and you know that only the upper 30 percent will make it so you better make sure you're in the upper 30 percent.

So the message we're trying to send and there're faculty that will cringe when I say that is that we know what it takes to be successful in college and if you care to be, here are the behaviors that will help you be successful. That means that faculty too need to understand what they have to do to meet students at some midpoint to say "You can be successful in this class and this is what it's going to take." I don't know what you learn when you sit in an office with this one who has access to what's going on in other institutions. I read some of this literature in higher education and I have colleagues on other campuses and we are not alone. Many campuses are experiencing many of these same realities. Whether ten years from now we'll look back on the first decade of 2000 and name it as something important in terms of what it meant to changing higher education, I don't know. I don't know if it's a huge transitional pattern we are in or if it's just normal growth and adapting.

#### [...] financial burden

Well, it's a huge responsibility. Community colleges at this part in Missouri are supported by tax payer money and this state really made an effort to channel first and second year students into community colleges. So the idea was that before the four year schools would receive them as juniors and seniors and that time period probably in some ways sealed our fate here. We get a huge influx of transfer students but students don't necessarily come to this campus as their first choice for freshmen year. But they do that because the community college experience is on the tax payer and not on them.



**Dr. R., Interim Chair for International Relations, Institution XI.**

What is your field of research?

History, German history.

Do you advise any thesis or dissertations at this moment?

No.

How often do you participate in conferences, annual meetings, things of that nature?

I think the average is once a year. Some years it's none, some years it's two or three, so.

When we think of your work time, how much of it goes toward administrative work and how much of that time is actually academic work in reading, writing books?

What do you include in administrative? Teaching, class preparation?

I guess that would go toward administrative, yes.

That's an important question, because that's a big chunk.

Let's include teaching under academic and any type of paper filing etc. under administrative.

Well, it's changed dramatically since last year when I was serving as the interim chair of the department because the regular chair was overseas. That constituted a lot of my time. I would say all told it was probably one third of my time and the one third was teaching. I would say even last year, 50 percent was teaching, 25 research and 25 administrative each. This year, the administrative has fallen off substantially and at the moment I'm not doing terribly much except preparing an European studies major which I've been working on for years. So I would say administrative is more like 10 percent and teaching is 50 with research being 40 percent.

So you said you were interim chair last year. What is your position title this year?

This year I'm not doing anything official, administrative jobs in the department. Even college wide I am not assigned any [...]. I am doing some work but it's not really time consuming.

You are one of the lucky ones, because you get to do research and stuff that you really want to do.

Well, actually I don't see it that way because I make that time. I do almost all research at night when my kids go to sleep or on the one day where I'm not teaching. These percentages might be a little off with teaching being a larger percentage of my time. It's hard to factor at the moment, because where I am lucky at the moment is that the classes I'm teaching right now I've been teaching before so there's not so much preparation strictly speaking. But then of course what happens is grading and all. The difficult thing about your question is that your time is like this, it just goes and goes: I was also finishing a book last year, the deadline was absolutely strict so if that meant working the entire weekend, that's what I did.

That may sound a little bit defensive. I don't think I am lucky in terms of that allegation. I think I am just making some choices about how to squeeze more out of my day. It's not like I watch TV or go see movies. I don't have a social life.

But you do have a family.

Yes, I do have a family. Do you have a social life?

Well, I'm working hard not to have one anymore. I'm writing my thesis. I'm bonding most closely with the library at this point in time. What courses have you taught in the last two or three years? I'm assuming undergrad?

I teach "The Age of total War" which is the first part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Europe. I teach the second part of 20<sup>th</sup> century Europe which I call "Contemporary Affairs". I'm doing a seminar on the Third Reich, I did one in the spring on the Russian revolution. I do a course now and then on the history of imperialism and then I'm going to do one on the history of Yugoslavia.

And what level are these courses?

Allost all on 2000 or 3000/4000 which are grouped together. So I haven't been teaching a course on the 1000 level and I haven't been teaching graduate classes. I'm squashed right in the middle zone.

That's good because that means you see a lot of students enrolled in some type of B.A.. degree. That's what you see most I assume. If you think of all these students regardless of their major: What do you think motivated them to enroll in a B.A.. degree program? Aside from wanting to know about philosophy and biology...?

I think they feel like in this economy it's a necessary credential for getting ahead. I think the majority are uncertain about what they want to do with it specifically, but they definitely feel like they are not going to succeed in having a worthwhile career without the B.A... I think they have a much vaguer sense of what precisely the university is offering in terms of knowledge skills, again thinking of our students in history. But again, I would say the majority fit that description. There is a significant minority, maybe 30 percent or more, who are hoping to go to graduate school and have some idea that they are either going to go to law school or maybe get a MA in IR or something. And then a few who are thinking of a Ph.D..

So if you then are looking at these people when they graduated their B.A.. program, how would you describe the person who holds a B.A.. degree? Ideally?

From our department specifically?

Sure, but also in general maybe.

I have less grounds for answering that question, because we don't keep track of alumni so much. It's also a skewed sample because the ones who call or write or send a message on facebook tend to be the ones who are doing something that they are interested in, excited about, happy with it and happy with the education they got here. There is a significant number who I'm sure doing work they are not proud, they don't like, [...].

Would you say that there are general traits that any university want people to acquire after they're done with their B.A..? Does that make sense?

It does and I think the answer is no. The university is completely agnostic on that question and we probably don't do as much as we could to encourage our students to think about professional schools. I think a lot of our students have the talent to go on and go to law school and the like. They lack the confidence or simply don't realize how that could change their lives for the better.

The parents are barely adjusted to the idea that they are going to college and paying for that. Imagine they're going to graduate school. It's out of the question.

The biggest problem I see at the university is the fact that students are working too much outside their schooling. They don't have enough time, they don't have enough focus on their studies and they don't do as well as they could. Then that cuts off avenues and I do kind of think the university could do more to prepare students to be professionals. The moment you walk in here you should think about doing well in order to study further and our students just don't. The biggest difference, if you walk over to XIII.: I bet 90 percent of the students are going into their freshmen year with the assumption that they are going to do some kind of graduate training. They have a sense of privilege, a sense of entitlement. And our students are the exact opposite. Ninety percent come in without any sure sense of what to do after college or what they're entitled to.

[...] Career Fair

If you think of the B.A. in terms of a structure as set apart from B.A., M.A. and Ph.D.: In how far is holding a M.A. and Ph.D. different from a B.A. other than knowing more about your content. Are you asking about the meaning of the credential?

What is the difference in the nature of the training, the program?

It mainly depends on the nature of the M.A.. More and more M.A. degrees are a total joke and they are not doing terrible much in terms of training you beyond what you should have learned anyway in a good B.A. program. I think some M.A. programs are much more rigorous in the humanities certainly. Some of them can be like a boot camp where you really get forced to work through a canon. Succeeding in a M.A. really means that you've mastered a canon. This is much less true in other places and certain fields. There it's a much more superficial degree and if you've happened to have worked really hard you'll take away that kind of extensive foundation that represents a Master in a field. And if you don't have that motivation and you didn't go down that path and you just worked on your diploma, it doesn't mean all that much.

What I want to assert that university performs two basic functions outside teaching content. This is enculturation: coming to school, you have the undergrad experience; you are being encultured to climb up the social ladder that some people assert is there. Then you get qualified to do something. So we have enculturation and qualification. If you look at the B.A., M.A., Ph.D.: What does which? Is there any more of the one or other in these degrees?

Totally depends on the college. The experience is so different. I taught at five different institutions over the years. Not the way I teach here. I taught one semester at a very elite college in California, one year at an extremely elite East coast liberal arts college. I taught two years at a not so elite state university and then one at a very elite state university. And then there's XI.. The answer would be different for each place. The small liberal arts college by far fits the example of enculturation that you described. It's some kind of finishing school. It's this experience that is much more than you do in class. It's about living on campus, share rituals. And it's about having gone there, even if you've been sound asleep for four years. If you graduate you've graduated with a degree from this place and people will always look at you and say: "Ah, you went there". It evokes certain notions and it sort of licenses you to act a certain way. Like having gone to Oxford or Cambridge: It licenses you to speak with the Oxbridge accent. That's one extreme.

In many ways, XI. is at the other extreme. We still are a commuter campus because our students are working outside on average 20 hours, some of them 25 a week. Some of them are living at home. So XI. is not as big a part of their life and the university is not priority one on their list. So the enculturation that there is, is about, hopefully, if we are doing our job, is being comfortable with books, with reading; being able to place books in an intellectual framework. It's about being able to write, being able to recognize good writing, recognize good argumentation. There's not much in a way of "Being a XI. Man". That would be preposterous, what would that mean? It's absurd. There is no such thing. On the other hand there is a Boden Man, a XIII. Man...they put their stamp on people.

On a graduate level, those experiences are so different depending on whether it's an elite graduate institution or not. I think those universities that pride themselves in training Ph.D. have again more of a boot camp experience. The example here would be the University of Chicago. To get a Ph.D. from there means there is no question, you've been through...it's like being an elite marine. You know that that person has been through those trainings and it means something.

On the other hand I think it's possible to get a Ph.D. from other institutions where you've been there for a while, done a couple of courses and wrote a dissertation. It might have been a good dissertation or it might have been a totally crappy dissertation, but you wrote a dissertation, it was approved, it's a credential. And that's the nature of things in the U.S.. Having lived in Germany I know it's completely different over there. Germans when they spend time in the U.S. they still don't understand how the system works, it's so foreign. [explaining my topic]

If you look at the student body you've encountered over the last 10, 15 years – also at other institutions – have you noticed any changes within the time you've been an instructor? Are there any changes in terms of how students work, how they come to college, how they work, what they expect what they want, what they need?

My experiences are so different, so it's so hard to compare. When I think back at being a teaching assistant at the University of Michigan and then being a professor here...I think there's been a general trend, not surprisingly very sad, that books become more and more irrelevant and students are less and less familiar with the pleasure of reading a book. The internet is part of the story. There's this myth that everything you need is on the internet and if you can't google it, it can't be real, can't be worth knowing. That's been the biggest change. Which isn't to say that in 1997 all students were happily reading Dostoyewsky, because of course we weren't and there was already that significant change. But I think it's gotten more extreme. There always were at least a few who were reading books, kinda crazy, loved poetry. Now there are barely any. I know one student who works in a book store and loves books, maybe gets them for free. It's hard to think of others. So you end up with these really smart students who have so much potential, yet they are locked out. They are prisoners, they are not getting access to what could make such a difference to them. That's my perspective and I find it sad.

Otherwise I don't think that much has changed. If anything, the quality of our students is getting better. In my first year there were many students where I just really had the feeling that they didn't have a clear reason for being in college and maybe they shouldn't be here. That was 2000.

Other people I've talked to feel a trend – especially deans etc – that students have a greater sense of entitlement in some way as to being a customer that is paying a significant amount of money for a service that they have the privilege of determining.

I think that is much less true of our students. If anybody says that of our students they're either kidding themselves or are having a very different experience. If anything, our students aren't grabbing the entitlements they do have. I tell my students all the time: come to my office hours, take up my time, use me. That's what I get paid for. To this day, every semester, there are students who apologize about sending me an Email. I have the same joke every semester. It's not like it rings and wakes me up in the middle of the night. You're not disturbing me. And 90% of the time the task they're asking me to do is completely reasonable. So I don't buy that. I mean I've heard that from other people here and I think it's total nonsense. Our students should have more sense of entitlement. They should be seizing what they deserve. If they had more sense of entitlement they wouldn't stand for the underfunded career center and other things the university should start changing.

Absolutely it's true of other places and I experienced it. When I taught at Boden on the East coast and I think it's gotten more and more true at places like the University of Michigan, but it's not true of XI..

If you look at again those students that you have, do you feel that there is a difference in the type of person or personality who chooses to do a B.A., M.A. or Ph.D.? Do you feel that people doing a B.A. are significantly different from people who stick with B.A. or decide to end it after a couple of semesters?

Yeah, I can tell you from my own experience of graduate school, people in Ph.D. programs tend to be from educated families, families who are reasonably well off. That's a strong strong bias in the population in Ph.D. programs. There's also an enormous numbers of people in Ph.D. programs whose parents are academics. Given the risks involved for going for a Ph.D. in the humanities or the social sciences, you have to have comfort with that risk and that either comes from money or privilege or having grown up where it's part of life to make sacrifices to learn more. That very much tends to be the profile.

On the other hand, I think law schools and professional schools are much more filled up with people from the working class and whose parents didn't go to college. They want their credentials to be practical and give them the opportunity to have earning power.

And people who stop at the B.A. are either folks who just never really thought through what graduate training might mean to them. Or they are people who didn't do well in college or insist on thinking about themselves of being people who didn't do well.

Or, one of my closest friends is a brilliant writer and he's so talented that he never needed graduate school and he knew that he'd have a career as a journalist. He's at the Washington post. There are people like that and America provides that opportunity. I know that in Germany you can't get a job at "Die Zeit" unless you have a Ph.D. which to me is a farce, it's ridiculous. But we have a different tradition.

If you look at that tradition you just talked about: What is the purpose of a B.A.? Is there such a thing?

It has changed radically in the last 30 years. There's no question that up until the 60s and 70s it was considered an elite degree. It was in itself this impremature that you've been trained, enculturated, you'd joined the elite. Starting in the 60s we started creating all these state schools with these massive campuses and the degrees have become much more of a mass phenomenon. In the 70s and 80s they still hued to the standards that said if you are going to have a B.A., we expect certain competencies. In the last 25 years it's changed again and most B.A. degrees are

trying to take care of what students should learn in high schools. Our high schools are failing so dramatically in the U.S. that there's no question that the college curriculum has pulled down. It doesn't have that meaning. Having a college degree, unfortunately, doesn't mean all that much. People think it does but I don't think they're right. I think the only thing it's doing is increasing the employers' comfort level. You don't need a college degree to sell insurance, but it says to the employer that this person is pretty smart and pretty competent and that I can trust them to read and write. Which isn't necessarily true, but that's what's the college degree is saying now.

[Veysey quote...]

University now has so many different functions in terms of its different populations and departments. I think our department still holds on to a kind of old school feeling that we want our students coming out of here to be at least aware of some definite historical reference points even if they can't talk intelligently about all of them. We like them to be trained in the liberal arts that they are aware of the western canon if they haven't read the western canon. And then we are also concerned with competency. We really want them to come out capable of writing and so forth, but I realize that other parts of the university are much more vocationally oriented, more concerned about narrow professional skills. That's a difference. The American university in particular is a bastion concerned with culture. We're not like European societies where you still have those other pockets of high culture, holding your own. We have fabulous symphony orchestras but it's a narrow audience. We have fabulous opera companies, but it's an even narrower audience. We have independent film industry but it only speaks to a certain segment of a population. So the universities really do represent the last bastion of a high culture ideas that is supposed to be available to everyone. That's sort of the last gasp of this mission.

St. Louis is my case study and statistics tell me that the largest minority in St. Louis are African Americans representing 30%, city and county combined. None of the universities represent that number in terms of student population. Again, from a European set of eyes, that doesn't make any sense to me. African American students are not any less smart. How come they are not represented?

Well, what percentage of European countries do you think is working class still?

I have no clue, actually.

Ok, we could guess that probably the majority is from families that either think of themselves or come out of that tradition of medial labor and match that definition. Do you think that European universities have a majority of students are from lower class or from menial families?

I've never looked it up but my instinct tells me that working class is probably not represented in terms of numbers.

Well, whether it is or isn't I think it's a class phenomenon first and foremost. I don't think that at this point it's a racial phenomenon. I think if you controlled for class and asked: What percentage of black and white middle class are going to college, you'd find that they are exactly the same. On the other hand the numbers are probably pretty consistent in terms of black lower class and under class. So not even people who work menial labor but families where nobody has a job or you're living in a community where significant percentage don't have a job. You'll have a similar slice of white Missouri, what we call out state when you go out to the rural communities, I bet that's exactly the same percentage of people not going to college.

So that 30% of African Americans are I would think 80 or 85 percent of that population is from working class or underclass background and that that in itself – I mean if you go to North St. Louis and just look around or visit the high schools and look at the conditions, people are dealing with so many disadvantages. The percentage that are getting high school degrees is outstandingly low.

The bias, statistically, in St. Louis county and city is so completely toward white prosperity and black poverty that it's surprising we are doing as well as we are. If you look at a place like XI. which doesn't offer much financially and located in a part of a city that is traditionally – rightly or wrongly - considered hostile to African Americans, it's also very hard to get to with public transportation. I had students from the inner city who were taking three buses to get out here, so in total it's amazing that we have as many students as we do. XIV. could be doing more, should be doing more...I don't know what their percentages are. XII. has – rightly or wrongly – the image of not being very friendly to African Americans.

I do think that it is an issue of class. At this point the university is tripping over themselves wherever there is a qualified applicant who is African American who can pay there way through college, all the universities are tripping over each other to get this student. A black, middle class student has many good reasons to go to XIII. over XI. in terms of their career, the resources.

So when you identified it as a class phenomenon rather than a race phenomenon, I don't have to ask you whether you think America is a classless society.

No, I mean it's gotten worse. College has gotten less affordable. The state schools in particular are charging more in real dollars than they were in 1975. The whole story you're hearing in this election with the middle class wages having been stagnant while the cost of living has been rising. There's no question, it's just gotten harder and harder. And if you look at the elite schools and who is going there, it's mind boggling. I mean at a place like XIII. they don't even need to give financial aid to, I think I've heard 80% of their students. It's incredible. These elite schools are training the elite, the children of the privileged class. Why is that, if XIII. has a endowment of 4 billion dollars, so obviously they could provide the financial aid if they wanted to. Part of the reason is that America is so class stratified that it's the children of the elite who get the good high school education, in some cases extraordinarily good education.

All the news about the decline of American education is very much a class stratified reality. In most parts of the country, yes, education has gone to the dogs and high school is a joke. But there are places like Clayton, Ladue where it's an absolute world class education. And not surprisingly, it's those kids who get into XIII., Harvard, Yale and so those schools are much more class stratified today than they were 50 years ago. And not of their own fault, I think it has to do with what has happened to American education more broadly.

You talked about the system becoming a mass phenomenon in the 60s. People today claim that the great accomplishment of our time is mass and universal access phenomenon where everyone who has the potential and who wants to can get the best education in the world. If you don't have the money there's a loan system, so there's really no excuse if you don't do it. Would you agree with the statement that American higher education is an all access or universal access system?

No, I couldn't be more appalled that someone would even suggest such a thing. I think again the starting place is the situation in the schools which in contrast to the European system are so polarized between the elite, suburbs which are excellent places providing thorough preparation verses the vast majority of utterly dismal schools which are just a total disgrace. It has to do in

part with the fact that education in Europe is centralized and the state is overseeing the wellbeing of schools everywhere regardless of what the earning potential of the population.

In America we have this lovely tradition of local control, so elite communities have one thing and working class communities have another. But that to me is the starting place for any discussion, because that to me creates already this situation where most Americans can't get their foot at the door for elite schools, not because they can't afford it. They don't have the preparation and if they went there, they'd probably sink because they are not prepared for it. And then add to that that even for middle class people you have a stratified system where they can't .. schools because they can't afford it so instead they're going to second and third-tier universities, so you have that split. And that totally contradicts the idea that we have made progress. We have actually gone back 30 or 40 years.

Whatever problem with the system, it seems that every university is very keen on establishing its own identity in terms of being a community. Like you said, you are a so and so man. How does a university establish itself as a community? In what ways does that happen?

Well, you invent a tradition. You invent this sensibility that we've been here since 1865 and generations of students have come out with this distinctive training and this distinctive sense of themselves. We have these rituals, we invent those rituals which tie to that notion of a tradition. It's much easier to do that if you have a campus that is a residential campus, isolated and highly regarded as being elite by people outside it. It's just easier with one of those was. You don't have that as a commuter school and you don't have these traditions and you are not perceived as being selective and elite, then you struggle. You try to find ways to compensate. You come up with these t-shirts, you sell the gorlocks, you do other things that hopefully gives a sense of belonging. But I'm not sure it's always possible. I don't think our students feel much identification with the university, maybe 30% do. The vast majority see this as a place to get their degree. "Pay your fee, get your B."

If we assume that universities create their own identities, for different purposes, would you assert there is such a thing like a national identity for the American university?

I think there is. I think people are not very aware of it because as in most things we don't really pay much attention to the rest of the world. But if you get out the U.S. and you realize what it's like in other countries, you become very aware that this whole identity quality, that certain different cultural area just stamp U.S. education just different. There's nothing like it in Europe, in England there's a little bit Oxbridge but it's not comparable. But again, we are not aware of it. We are more aware of the differences.

[standardized entrance testing and success]



**Dr.W., Department Head of Education, Institution XII.**

What is your field of research?

Really I have three areas I focus on and publish in. The first is foreign language education so I work on policy issues. The policy questions I look at are implementing programs in the K-12 setting, what are obstacles. It's an historical approach. Within that as well, a subarea, is the development of pedagogy in beginning teachers, so how that changes within the first three years. What have they learned in their teacher education program in terms of teaching a language and how that changes when they initially start and how that emerges over time. So foreign language education. Beginning teacher development: stages of that, within the first three to five years. How teacher view teaching, their persistence, or leaving the profession – how that all changes and is related.

Then I have a third area which is teacher identity formation. How people view themselves a professional. What I look at is the cross between spirituality, spiritual beliefs and teacher identity. Right now I'm working on a whole group of interviews of thirty teachers. Ten came from a justice oriented urban teacher program, ten came from a program that focused on proheal Catholic schools and ten who have worked in a graduate program that focuses on Jewish day schools. So I am looking at how their spiritual beliefs influence what they do in the classroom and also their view of the profession. Broad, but three areas.

Do you advise any thesis or dissertations at this moment?

I do, several. We have M.A., probably eight at this point. And dissertations, I am at five committees and I'm directing two as the chair.

How often do you participate in conferences, annual meeting of any kind?

Depending on the year, it goes in cycles, anywhere from one to three presentations and these are usually tied in with articles and publications. I've also chaired conferences in the past, International Society for Language Studies, I am on their board and chaired their last three conferences. So I would say I probably highly participate, if I'd self describe. That's my opinion.

If you look at all your work: How much of the time do you allocate for administrative functions and how much for academic work?

Well, it's changed so much over time. I can give you the last three. Before I came from the University of Notre Dame and I had a split: administrative, teaching and research and I'd say it was about a third. Probably 40% research and scholarship and the rest being split between the rest. Here, the last year I was a department chair so I did far less teaching. If you include working with graduate students in scholarship, then it was 50% with 40% administration and 10% teaching. I had a one course teaching load.

And currently I have no teaching load, I'll probably teach one course next semester. Now as dean it's probably 70% administrative and right now about 20% research. It'll ramp up as I work with graduate assistant who start new.

Why do you think, generally speaking, people enroll in B.A. programs? What do they seek?

I think in our college our mission is to prepare professionals at the B.A. level. We are increasingly trying to orient toward a five year program so those who are entering can see

themselves continuing for a year or two for an advanced degree. So our mission really is to prepare professionals in five different departments. We know that many students who are graduates may work or return for higher education as well, but at the B.A. level we are not really looking at them continuing in higher education. We know that can happen. We're trying to get them a good theoretical and practical education. So my thought is they enter with a career in mind and in our case we're thinking service type careers.

When you look at a person who has graduated from a B.A. program, how would you describe this person ideally?

Ideally? Well, I can speak for the undergrad population in the College of Education and Public Service. Number one, they feel at home in a professional environment. From the first course they are out in clinics and schools. They feel at home in an urban and suburban setting. If it's a school or clinic or social work setting. So they have some kind of field experience and are ready to jump into a position. Also the type of tracks we are trying to preparing our students with, there is a theoretical track so they understand the thinking behind what they are doing, the big ideas and knowledge. But they also have the tools to implement those ideas in practice. Those are general, but I think those would be the three ideals of a BA graduate.

When you look at what you've just pointed out and you compare it to people holding a M.A. or Ph.D., what would you see as the difference? What's that type of person?

I've had both students in the same class and I see a real distinction. One I feel like the M.A. students I've encountered, they are going through a deferment process meaning there are going through a decision making process. Some are thinking of leaving the profession they are in and the degree may be a pathway to that. Could be higher ed, could be a higher administrative level. The other thing is that they have more intense questions about what they are doing. They want to learn more and or it better. They also want to prove their practice. Also, others in M.A. level, there's an advancement piece. They have to get this advanced degree if they want to continue to advance in terms of level or pay raise as well. Those are the three kinds of things I see happening at the M.A. level.

In terms of the Ph.D., there's certainly the advancement piece. There are those professionals who see it as another key element for not only pay raise but maybe going up in terms of administrative level. The big distinction I see in the Ph.D. is that there are those who want to answer and investigate questions that could affect the professions. They are looking to change the profession in terms of their own research and ideas. Some want to develop instructional materials or programs or they want to conduct research and then quite a few are looking to go into higher ed in terms of positions.

What I want to assert is that the university fulfills generally speaking to functions: qualification in terms of teaching people what they need to know and the other is enculturation in terms of familiarizing people who come to university with its culture and Americans live in. Which is the degrees to which the degrees fulfill these functions.

Let's take the enculturation first. I can see this happening in all those degrees but in different ways. B.A. and M.A., there is looking at foundations courses – you see this prevalent – this notion of this is what the profession is about, this is what you should be doing, this is how you should be thinking. Or this is what's wrong with the profession, this is what you should be doing

differently. This is what the old guard thought, this is what the new guard thought. Maybe it's an ideology, maybe you could call it that in face. But I see that applied towards your work, not towards the university.

Now in higher ed, in terms of the Ph.D. in particular, I see it much more applied to the institution. You need to be doing this or that if you want to be part of the academy. You need to have a core of research courses, you need to know what good publication is and what isn't, you need to know what good research is and what isn't, you need to belong to these professional organizations and there may be an ideological piece to that as well. So I think there's enculturation that takes place but in different ways.

Qualification, if I look at the levels, both at the M.A. and the undergrad – I mean, to me that's an easy piece in one sense because we prepare professionals in every department, we prepare professionals. We have to meet accreditation standards, we have to pass tests, so there's definitely a huge qualification piece in terms of professional standards and being certified. We have counseling, social work, teacher, those in real estate who have to pass these certification tests. And then higher ed, to me... I see more the enculturation piece than the qualification. Those qualifications maybe tied into different degree programs so you might have a Ph.D. in educational foundations or a Ph.D. in counseling and family therapy and each would have demarcation although maybe arbitrary is the sets of courses you take. That then makes you qualified in that discipline.

But I also feel like the enculturation is even stronger in that there are ways of thinking and doing. That also distinguishes you from other areas as well.

I read the book by Veysey and he writes about the history, the early 20<sup>th</sup> century where they moved away from this ivory tower idea of truth and beauty and realized that we might not be able to survive if we keep doing that so we need to strive for utility as well. So within those two corners, in his book he says: "With culture as an end, university as no business". I read culture as enculturation here and I was wondering what your comment on that would be.

I think there's a huge almost angst between the two. When I go to conferences for example, people will look at the program and at the presentation titles and they laugh and say: What are these people thinking? It has no value to me etc. I see that in conferences like the American Council for Teachers of Foreign Languages. By its name it's an organization for teaching of language and it gathers about 6,000 professionals a year. The chair of modern language presented just last year.

I see that there's almost two groups, even within different language organizations. There's those who are really about educating and teaching children and you're arguing this philosophical idea about what is language. And then there's those who bring that together in a way. I think I'm going on a tangent. But I definitely feel that there's that kind of angst. I used to attend a conference called... American Association of Eastern European and Slavic Language and there I saw that even more profoundly. Where you have those who see language in more practical terms and those who see it as a discipline of study in theoretical terms. You see huge differences.

In our colleges we see that in terms of schooling. Certainly in the city, those professionals in the schools, they look at university in particular and asking what we are doing for them. "You have million dollar research agendas, but how is that improving the schools right in your backyard?" And we have those real frank conversations, I just came from such a meeting.

So in one sense that quote makes sense, because what's the value if right outside the gate of your university the discipline in which you are in is not having an impact. The other side of it is that maybe the disciplines have to change to have an impact and something of that has to be in the theoretical research realm. So I guess I don't quite agree with the quote. I feel like maybe it's the charge of the universities to deal with both realms. If they do that then they will be performing their mission.

When you look at the mission of a university, it obviously influences people in choosing one. What changes, if any, have you seen in the student body over the last 5, 10, 15 years...people who come to the university.

This is only my second year at XII. so I can't say I've seen changes here. My decade as a high school teacher before that, I do think that the changes I've seen in terms of people who are coming...I'm gonna answer this in terms of drawing on my own experience being in undergrad and going through a teacher education program and now after years being at the other end, not only teaching but administrating. My feeling is that those as students once here expecting and in a sense demanding that they graduate with a quality and ability to do what we say they will be able to do. This is very generalized but I feel as though what I've seen in the last decade is more sense of the university being more reactive and responsive to the notion of our graduate having be able to act and do and practice when they finish. We can't just give them generalities. It can't just be theory but the practice has to be there and it has to be from the very beginning of the program. Not just something that you are delaying to a student teaching seminar. Students will just leave if they don't agree and not feel like they are getting what they need and the program, it's much easier to go somewhere else now and they do.

When you look at the statistics, the largest minority in St. Louis are African Americans with 30%, city and county combined. None of the universities reflect that number in their student body. So there is this all access idea that everyone who is smart enough can go and that seems to be not the case.

Part of that is going down even to the school level and seeing what they do. There would be some schools that would be predominantly minority that would say they have a high placement rate into post secondary. That might be two year programs that then transition into a four year.

For me, the answer is multi faceted. I think from the outside you want to simply say that there are qualifications that have to be met. XII. will be very different from XIV.. If you look at averages, we expect an average ACT of about 27 that's maybe 7 points higher than XIV.. So from the outside you can say we have these benchmarks where we say it doesn't even matter where you're from or what you do, you're not going to be admitted.

Now, the other side of that though is that you might also look at that and say that there's a disjunction between secondary and higher ed. That's an old theme in history. Accreditation came from that notion of creating a seamless transition between secondary and higher ed. In fact, a 100 years ago, you'd see a mish mash between the two so you'd see universities teaching secondary students.

So but the other piece of this is what is happening between secondary and higher ed. You do see in summer programs on higher ed specific target populations that aren't enrolling into programs that would allow them to be enculturated in a university setting. Number two provide more intensive instruction in math or science. Harris Stowe has these early entrance programs. We

have students who are admitted on a conditional basis so they come the summer before the first academic year. So they start university during the summer session and it's designed to allow them to learn about the services on campus, it provides academic tutoring and it gets them started earlier with the idea that you're not just dumped in trying to swim in the university system.

Those are all efforts that try to decrease that gap in terms of minority status whatever. But still there's a huge gap. Is the question why that exists or how would I explain that?

I mean, racial discrimination is done with but there is some type of discrimination here going by the numbers and I am wondering what that type is.

Well, I think there are racial categories that are represented, maybe overrepresented in higher ed. So if you look at it in a broad way, there are just certain entrance standards that have to be met. But that begs the question what is happening to make that, to alleviate that. And I think that's a perfect example where it can't be put simply on a secondary level. They are not trying to feed that but there's also the question of what higher ed is doing in preparation with students in the secondary level to bring them up to the standards needed to enter.

Maybe what I'm trying to say that an answer to that would be that there's not cooperation between the institution at a level and age early enough to alleviate that. When I say I come from a meeting looking at that issue, the question is what do we do. We have 40 programs reaching out, provide family counseling to schools. At the same time it's not all coordinated, we haven't measured the outcome of those sorts of things so part of it is not trying to blur the distinction between the two institutions but maybe work in a way where we have the same goals. We in higher ed ask how we can work in a way that we can help bring students up in a way that will qualify them and make their transition to higher ed a reality.

It surprises me that you haven't mentioned money at all. What my sense is is that racial discrimination was done with but it seems that there is some kind of socio-economic discrimination happening. It just so happens that African Americans tend to be less privileged, less rich, not living in Clayton and Ladue and so on. There are people who really defend the American system as an all access system. Would you agree?

Well again, to me it's way more complicated than that. On one continuum where I chose that as one end, I think you could say that if you test well, meet certain qualifications and have minority status, I would even say loans, most universities have funds if you don't have the financial needs. But to me the problem comes before that. It's the work that comes before the test taking and the application. As I said, I would say that most universities – if you show financial need, especially if it's severe financial need and you have qualifications – the university will have funds and they'll find scholarships that are not loans even. So then the question becomes what about poverty. It certainly is a defining factor. It's interesting that you mention Clayton, because that's where my daughter is. It's interesting to look at what is happening locally, because it's just my second year here at XII.. There's a bussing system. So one idea that has been in practice for many year is the open seating policy. So any school district around St. Louis, if poverty is leading to low tax bases which are one contributor to issues in schooling and funding, then any student city may enroll in any suburban school. So in Clayton at the elementary school where my daughter goes to, half of the students in her class are from the city. They come in every day from the city, they participate so that's one way of saying "Yes, we recognize that there are differences" so if there are tax issues, funding issues, there's tax based issues, there's private

issues, so if there are open seats, we'll make it possible for students to attend. You don't have to renew it every year.

So if you look at Kirkwood or others, their population may be a 5% minority but the school may have 25 or 30%. So there's that kind of structural way. But from when I remember taking sociology, I remember poverty being the defining factor. There's rural poverty, urban poverty each linked to different racial make ups but there are some similarities between lack of education or progress in education or access to higher education as well. What was the original question?

If it's an all access system. It's a polarizing question, obviously.

I remember a rally here last year outside the mayor's office and it was a rally to save free public education. And it goes sort of anti charter. But to me I read that and I was thinking that whole premise of free public education is tax base. So it's not free, it has to be paid for. You have local, state and federal revenue. In fact, if you look at the first common schools, they were taxed and so to me I see that poverty is a part of that formula. For me, it is all access but there's a formula to that. If you are in an area that's depressed and doesn't have a tax base, it's going to effect the ability of schools to offer program and special services. There's a whole tax base question. To me it's all about the formula behind all access and that's where there will be no parity. If you recognize that it's not really free and that you define all access in a certain way, you have to work on affecting or changing that formula.

Here in the city there have been all kinds of proposal. There was one to take all the suburban and city schools and create a pie so realign and create brand new school district not defined by governance line but everyone sharing city and suburb. In this way, we could combining different tax bases but of course people never was voted for. But these are those sort of ideas where we say it's all access but we're changing the formula for that.

[...] For me, it seems that it's all access as long as you fit a certain part of society and if you don't then the rules are different.

True, I mean there are exceptions. There are people who progress in that but it's not necessarily the rule.

If I am an African American living in the city and I have no way to put my kids in a good school and I chose to put them into a good school in Clayton, my mindset as a mother is a different mindset than the mother who works four job and never sleeps.

Yes, it's self selective. Yes, right. It's a self selective group. I mean, the public school system is really based on property tax and if that's the predominant...and what it does it creates groupings because people want to restrict...if I'm paying high property tax, people don't want to pay for someone else. To me, there's a financial tradition that is historical. It can't be erased by saying it's all access or free education, it's just a term. But that doesn't erase that historical nurse that gives us the system right now. Also traditionally the federal government doesn't want to get involved and doesn't want to commit financially. There are programs and titles you can apply for that give you extra funding based on the poverty level your students are. But that varies from year to year and it's not ever a constant plus it doesn't necessarily cover your needs.

[...] loan system

What I find most interesting about that is the rate at which state universities have really increased. When I went to graduate school it was 1300 per semester for a full load. Now it's probably up to 1500. I mean I could work a part time job and pay for my...I mean I could do it but it doesn't work that way now. So in some ways you might say it's become exacerbated and the relief is to go through a private and mixed government loan system which is predatory in the sense that the loan industry loves the structure because they make money off of it. The university can raise their tuition and they have someone who is going to cover the tuition for them and they can counsel students into the loan industry.

**Dr. D., Dean of Arts and Sciences, Institution XI.**

What is your field of research?

Philosophy, and the work I've done is in epistemology and philosophy of religion. The only book I've written is on good reasoning, applying epistemology to real life situations.

At this point, do you advise any thesis or dissertations?

No.

How often do you participate in conferences or annual meetings within your field?

I've not been to an American Philosophical Association meeting or any of its subdivisions for the entire time I've been dean. I've just been too busy.

And you have been Dean since 2002?

Yes. When I was at UCLA I was much more involved in my profession. I was teaching a lot of classes. I was assistant dean and associate provost there, but I was still teaching a couple of classes, doing some book reviews, finishing off my book, going to APA meetings and giving papers, but I've been too busy as dean.

Speaking of that, what administrative functions do you regularly perform?

I guess I'll say it broadly and if it's to broadly let me know. The dean provides leadership to the college in a handful of areas. The most important one is academic leadership. That has to do with making sure that the highest quality faculty are hired given the quality of the institution and that the right kind of policies are implemented. As you advance your faculty and because we have a lot of adjunct faculty at Webster, being sure we have high standards for adjunct faculty; being sure that the appropriate assessment policies are places so that we can properly assess our academic programs; developing new academic programs. So there is first of all academic leadership. There's administrative leadership. I have to be sure that we have sufficient resources, space, money, staffing in order we have enough administrative support to provide the academic function. The third piece is – I guess I would call it broadly – the communications piece. And that's marketing, recruitment, there's an office that does marketing and recruitment, but we have to be sure that they are fully aware of what we are doing; that the word gets out there about our college. And the fourth piece is development and fundraising and that kind of supports everything. I spend a lot of time working with our development officer and the broader development office. Developing foundation and corporate grant proposal and so on. So academics, administration, communications and fundraising, the four main areas.

When you take those four main areas, how much of your working time is allocated to your functions as dean and how much time to you spend on reading and writing books, conferences - your personal academic work?

More than 100% of 40 hours a week is spend on those four dimensions. In fact, we just had a weekend in L.A. and people said to me "Did you have a good vacation?" and I say "What do you mean, vacation? My staff is constantly sending me e-mails and telling me to please take a vacation because I was on the phone and doing e-mails constantly. I was I'm sure working 40 hours a week while I was there. But on evenings and weekends I try and get reading done and I go to some interesting conferences, but they are not about philosophy. They are about higher



education. I am very involved in the American Council of Education. I'm on the board and I have some responsibilities with them. So I do some professional development things but it's more in education than in philosophy.

If you look at your position within the university as a community, why do you think it is that people want to enroll in a B.A. program? What is the motivation for someone to get a B.A., in your experience and opinion?

There are many motivations. Some people do it because it never occurred to them to do anything else. They don't have any stronger motivation going to college than going to high school, it is just expected and it's part of the path that is laid out for them. Those who are more reflective about it are probably divided into two broad camps with a little bit of a left over. The two broad camps are those who want to get prepared for a profession. The other camp is those who want to get prepared for life. Being the Dean of Arts and Sciences I have a lot of affinity for those who want to get prepared for life and value the more general liberal arts education, but I understand totally those who are pressured by their parents and asked "What does this prepare you for?". And the little remainder is those who want to go to college and want to have a fun college experience and we have few of those at Webster, in a way, because we don't have fraternities and it's not so much a party culture here. But there are people who go for the B.A. for that reason, I guess.

How would you describe a person holding a B.A., aside from the content knowledge?  
Entirely descriptive or normative?

Absolutely both.

What we are aiming for is a broadly educated person who is able to think critically, who is able to speak articulately, work together collaboratively with other people on projects, who has a fundamentally cultural literacy, who understands the basic core things you need to understand to be in conversations in which somebody will mention Socrates or the odyssey or the double helix or Freud, so that they can get along in these conversations without being embarrassed. This is different from the European approach where you try and achieve that in high school; also someone who has expertise in a single area, sufficient to prepare for grad school or get a job in the area.

When you look at this imaginative person who has a B.A. and then you look at people who get M.A.s or Ph.D.s, what is the difference of people who get those degrees?

Well first there are two different kinds of M.A.s. There are the M.A.s that you get on your way to a Ph.D. and those are pretty meaningless. I got two different MAs in philosophy. I started off in one program and then I switched to UCLA. An M.A. in philosophy is meaningless. It's just something you get along the way. And in any liberal arts area and in many science areas, an M.A. doesn't mean anything. They are just a marker as you go on to your Ph.D.. But there are M.A. degrees in professional areas where it is either the terminal degree or at least it does provide you with a useful professional credential. An M.A.T. is that kind of degree, and M.A. in Counseling is that, an M.B.A. is that. It really means something, but it means something in a professional setting. So usually if you have an M.A. in philosophy or English or Biology or French, it means that you washed out of a Ph.D. program. It actually does mean that usually. It means oh they didn't...something happened and they didn't finish their Ph.D.. But if you have an

MA in those other areas, it means that you are preparing for a profession and you got that preparation.

In respect to these M.A.s that you described: What kind of education does the Ph.D. give in opposition to the M.A.?

A Ph.D. is supposed to say that you have a mastery of that subject sufficient to the level that you are qualified to do original research and that you are qualified to provide instruction to people who are at the undergrad or early grad level. Again, there is not the same...I guess that's...there are more and more Doctorates offered in professional areas. I give you an example. We have an M.S. in Nurse Anesthesia, that's in Arts and Sciences – so I get to be the dean of the medical school as well, it's a dollar extra a year – and that's a master's and it's considered a terminal degree. So once you get your masters, you are fully qualified, once you pass your boards, to be a nurse anesthetist and actually they end up doing pretty much everything an anesthesiologist does who is an M.D.. The profession is been changing, of nurse anesthesia, and the amount of training required to be a nurse anesthetist has increased and increased and increased as they've understood that they want to be really skillful at what they do. People are looking around and seeing that the amount of time getting a masters in nurse anesthesia is the same amount of time that you spend in some disciplines getting a doctorate. So the whole profession has decided to move in a direction where they have a doctorate rather than a masters, so we looked at our program and we only need to add few courses and it'll be a doctorate rather than a masters. It will be called a D and AP, a doctor of nurse anesthesia practice. It's not a Ph.D. which is a research degree, it's a practical doctorate. Now if you were to say you get a masters or a doctorate in nurse anesthesia, what's the difference, the answer would be not really any. Because the whole profession is dropping on a masters and turning in into a doctorate which is then supposed to indicate that you are really really well prepared to do the profession. And of course medical doctors don't want us to do that because then everyone is addressed as doctor, but they are not really doctors...so it's kind of...

What I want to assert is what happens at university is two things: enculturation and qualification. If we stick with those for a moment, which of these three general degrees do what?

That's interesting. In Arts and Sciences in America, if I understand what you mean – enculturation means something about having a level of understanding and assimilation of academic values of your community, I guess something like that, whereas by qualification you must mean something more professional.

Well the B.A. is clearly more enculturation oriented and less qualification oriented. I actually have some additional thoughts on that. Saying that is has a focus in enculturation is more of an internal description of what happens in a B.A. degree, but there is also an external. One of the most important things a B.A. serves to do, I think, in society and in America, and as I understand it elsewhere as well, is provide social mobility. Thus by giving this enculturation opportunity to as many people as possible, it allows that B.A. to serve a broader social purpose of allowing people who are underprivileged to move up the social ladder. And I think that is an incredibly important purpose for a B.A. but you are doing it in part by providing enculturation and you are also giving them a certain qualification to be qualified to be on a higher social level than I used to be. Another thing I think about with the B.A., I see high school as more enculturation oriented and I see an increasingly high importance on individual excellence in the undergrad program. By that I mean, enculturation sounds a little bit to me like we are trying to get the sheep herded

properly – I’m trying to be a little bit Nietzschean here. Whereas one thing that we really want to do once people know how to be a good citizen and to stand in line and to vote and to speak the right the vocabulary is to encourage a certain amount of rebellion. And a certain amount of you know what, I can be great, I can be fantastic. Yes I have to be able to play with others but I can also rise above others in certain ways and I think that’s not exactly enculturation, that’s something else.

Masters and Ph.D. are certainly more in the qualification area, even in the liberal arts areas you usually getting one of those degrees so that you can become a college professor and you almost always have to have that degree to become a college professor. Or in the professional side you certainly have to have the degree to become a nurse anesthetist or a lawyer or an M.D. or counselor.

When you look at people enrolled in these programs, have you seen any changes in the students?

In the kind of students enrolled in these programs...well we only have one masters degree that would be an academic masters degree that’s the IR degree. All the other M.A. degrees are really professionally oriented. We’ve seen a difference in students enrolled in our International Relations (IR) M.A. degree, really because the world has changed, because there is a greater interest in IR. Plus also we have changed. We have a lot of online programs now and we have also got this global M.A.. So we used to only get nontraditional older students who would take our evening classes in most of our MA courses, even in IR. But these are students in their mid 20s, fresh out of college, full time students. So this is in our IR programs. The audience has changed but it’s partly because the world has changed and we have changed, so we are attracting students who we otherwise would not be attracting. In our professional programs in Arts and Sciences, I can’t say I’ve seen any trend. We have nursing also in Arts and Sciences, nurse anesthesia, we have legal studies which really attracts paralegals and we have the mental health counseling program that has 2000 students in it, it’s massive. In every case they have grown and become a little more selective, because we are trying to improve quality.

When you look at the students getting a B.A., are there any changes you’ve observed?

Again I would say the quality of students has gone up a bit because we’ve been able to become more selective. The number of traditional students have gone up a bit because we’ve built more dorms and we can accept more. Again, that is because we have changed and because of how the world has changed. I can’t say that within these six years I’ve seen big changes.

Do you observe trends in general when you look at the discourse of your peers, other deans?

The trends in general that I read about and hear about from other deans have to do with culture and demographics. There’s clearly a greatly increasing number of Asians and Hispanics that are coming into American higher education and just looking at immigration trends and the population of our high schools and elementary schools, it’s very clear that the number of Asians and Hispanics is already starting to go up. The number of Caucasians is actually starting to go down a bit. The entire number is going to stay the same for a couple of years and then start go up again, only because of the increase of Asians and Hispanics. It’s still a small enough change that we in the Midwest are not really seeing that, but those in Florida and California and Texas they’re seeing it big time already. So demographics. The question was undergraduates? The other change, and I keep wondering if I am seeing this or if I’m imagining it, because everybody else is seeing this and I read about it, is a culture change. Students, it is sad, have a much greater

sense of entitlement and see themselves as customers that must be satisfied. Instead of – you’ve probably heard this saying that education is one of the few things that people are willing to pay for and not get – so my colleagues will sometimes complain that students aren’t interested in education, they are just getting the grades, certification and if you are doing something that is particularly rigorous and is oriented to getting them well educated and they feel as though, or their parents feel as though, well their grade isn’t going to be as good or they are having to work too hard, they then will take the kind of perspective of saying “Well, I’m the customer and you have to do this my way.” Through the years I’ll run into students like that every now and then and I respect my colleagues who say that’s a big trend, but I don’t think we don’t have much of those at Webster. That is a trend that you read about. There is a trend toward more online courses which doesn’t seem to be a bad thing so far in terms of quality of education, that students are actually well taught online course, as long as you’re not getting a preponderance of your courses online, can provide you a really good education because of the quality of interaction between the professor and the student and the other students. You can hide out in the B.A.ck of the room in class, but you can’t hide out. If you are not contributing then you’ll be targeted and made to contribute, but you lose stuff. What else are the trends that I see in undergraduate education? It feels to me as though, and I can’t quantify this empirically, that there is a renewed interest in social topics. Environmentalism, human rights – maybe it’s just because students are getting sick and tired of this bleeding administration – I think there is a trend and I hear that from other colleagues as well.

I have a quote from Veysey: With culture as an end, university has not business.  
With culture as an end? Is it enculturation as a goal?

Well, we are talking early 20<sup>th</sup> were going to university automatically put you in what they call the cultured person; the person who has access to social functions. Culture in the sense of advancing socially?

The university has no business, that was his opinion. That is should no be our goal to have culture as an end. I think he must have some specialized notion of culture that I am not thinking about, because I firmly believe that is an important pillar of higher education to promote social mobility. And promotion social mobility has a lot to do with enculturating people, with giving them access to not only ideas and vocabulary but also other people. Because if you don’t go to college, you are not going to have a whole array of business connections and networking opportunities and that is one of the things that is so hard for African Americans. If they don’t go to college, even if they are talented business people, they don’t have that network of relationships as well as role models. But enculturation is a piece of that. I spoke of cultural literacy, that is part of being able to integrate and interact. If he means producing snobs, then I agree with that. But I think the whole enculturation and social mobility piece has to be cast in terms of social contribution and it’s one thing to want people to excel individually but it is another thing to produce snobs and I guess there are college and universities who are very snobbish and elitist and don’t see themselves as serving these kinds of purposes in society, but see themselves as elevating themselves higher than anybody else. That I’d say we don’t have any business doing.

You brought up different parts of society. [...] 36% potential black students are not represented in the higher education system and I wonder, from your American culture eye, how can one attempt to understand why that is?

The first thing I have to say is that it is a tragedy and it needs to be addressed. And the second thing is, it's such a systemic problem that there is no single simple solution to it. The African Americans in the St. Louis area not only are failing to graduate from high school at rates far greater than the Caucasian population, failing to go to college at a rate far greater, their health is far worse, their socioeconomic status is far lower, their drug use is far higher, their teenage pregnancies are far higher, I mean you can just go down the list. There's this entire systemic problem. We have a travesty of a school district in St. Louis that people are trying to fix and it just doesn't work. So I guess I think what a college like Webster can do, I mean it's not up to us to solve the problem. But what can we do? I think there are two things we can do, at least. One is that we can educate our students so that when they graduate they understand the nature of the problem and they feel the commitment to be a part of the solution. We can prepare leaders who become involved in the community and attempt to solve the problem in its many facets. Number two is that we can do whatever it takes to improve the pipeline into a place like Webster by aggressively recruiting and by developing partnerships with schools in the area, perhaps the school of education and there are places like...[secretary interrupts]. So preparing our graduates and improving the pipeline. We have 12% which reflects the national average but not the St. Louis average. And of course at the graduate level we give more masters degrees the African American than any other college or university in the country.

If I play the devil's advocate and I say that America is an all access university system because we do have a loan system. What would your take on that be? Is it an all access system?

I'm thinking about that phrase 'all access'. I guess in a way it is and in a way it isn't. Particularly you'd have to include the community colleges which is something probably unique in America. They have very low hurdles for admission, which are extremely cheap so there's hardly anybody who can't afford to go or can't get into community college. So I think that anybody who wants to go to college can pretty easily go to college, but the problem comes with the 'wants'. It's still a pipeline issue. So you have a lot of people, a lot of that 36% of African Americans don't see themselves as college material, they have their own enculturation whereby those who studied hard and took academics seriously were called 'too white'. So it's a culture whereby if you do focus on academics, you are not part of your cultures. So you get the sloppy appearance and you get the underperformance in school because if you look as though you want to achieve something, you have to separate yourself out of the culture that you are part of. So typically the schools aren't as good and so it's partly because your culture doesn't reward you for excelling and it's partly because you don't have the same opportunity in your school to excel because you don't have good teachers and good resources. Not to say we don't have dedicated teachers in those schools because we often do, but it's a pipeline problem again and it's very systemic, but those who want to have access.

In what ways does XI. constitute itself as a community?

There are really three XI.s. Here at St. Louis and the metro bases that are 80 different places around the U.S. and then the 5 international campuses which are more like Webster St. Louis because they have the undergrad/grad thing. We have an office of student affairs working with students and the staff. They oversee the dorm experience. You have different dorm wings that

have different learning themes to them. You have different activities going on. You have a whole orientation for the new students coming in the last three days to understand what it means to be a Webster student. They have a lot of activities that are directed toward the students, some academic and some not. You'll have speakers, you'll have musical events, you'll have student athletics. So there's a lot of effort, a lot of resources put into providing a whole experience and not just the academic experience.

And by experiencing you mean experiencing whatever the Webster community is?

That's right. And I shall also say that because we are not a research institution, the faculty that we hire we hire strictly on the basis of their teaching qualifications. That is the exact opposite of UCLA. We would hire faculty strictly on the basis of their research qualification and we figured that a few of them will turn out to be good teachers and that's great. Here we hire strictly on the basis of teacher and a few will turn out to be good researchers and that's great. So we have small classes, almost never more than 15, dedicated teachers and students will have a good classroom experience at Webster and that is part of the whole experience. So in and out the classroom, there is a lot of attention to the experience.

You pointed out the difference between UCLA and XI. as being different types of members of the higher education culture. How do you feel about a nation higher education identity in the US? Does that exist given that there are so many types?

More in the US than anywhere else in the world. In some ways there are attempts to homogenize and Bush wanted to have standardized tests for everybody and everybody objected: "No, we are all different, you can't do that." But then you keep getting more diversity and there's the for profits who keep adding more diversity to the mix. There's certainly less of a national identity in higher education here than in most other countries. If there's a single national identity then it is that higher education is in a certain way a pathway to being an educated person and a pathway to success in your career. But you can't get much more precise than that in America.

**Dr. A., Department Chair of Modern Languages, Institution XII.**

What is your field of research?

Broadly speaking modern German literature and then more specifically, German exile studies: Alexander von Humboldt, GDR literature. I do some work in German foreign language pedagogy.

Do you advise any thesis or dissertations at this moment?

No, we only have an undergraduate program in German. But it ends here with a senior inquiry, which is kind of an independent study leading to a lengthy paper of 17-20 pages. So it's kind of a thesis within the context of an undergrad education.

How often do you participate in conferences, meetings, national events of any kind?

At least once a semester, two or three times a year.

For your specific field or...?

For Germanic studies and then as you know I chair this department, so there are some general foreign language conferences that I got to listen to papers and inform myself about general issues in foreign language education..

What administrative functions do you regularly perform?

I chair the Department of Modern and Classical Languages here at XII. with 30 full time faculty and we have another 15, 20 adjuncts and probably about 12 teaching assistants. I can't really spell out...I kind of run the show. I try to make it work.

When you look at administrative functions in opposition to academic work, how much time to you allocate to those two?

The administrative part is probably 50 percent of my work, and then 25% teaching and research each.

You said you have a B.A. program...?

In German.

In the others you have graduates as well?

Just French and Spanish where we have M.A. programs. And then we have undergrad programs in French and Spanish, German, Russian, Italian and the Classics, that's Greek and Latin. Then we teach Chinese and Hindi and Arabic, but we don't have any degrees in these areas.

When you look at people who enroll in B.A. programs in general, why do you think it is they decide to get a B.A.. What motivates people to continue to learn?

I think there's a certain amount of social pressure that takes place in high school because as we talked about before, a large percentage of students study here. There's lot of peer pressure: That's what you do when you finish high school, you study.

And then the statistics are pretty clear that people with a B.A. have a chance to get better quality jobs which means higher pay, you get higher into the middle class. I think that's a strong motivating factor.

And then related to that social factor too is the family. Father has studied and probably push the children to do the same.

When you look at a person who has completed a B.A., how would you describe this person, aside from being knowledgeable about a field.

From this institution or generally?

This institution.

Well, this institution being Jesuit-Catholic...and it's not just a Jesuit-Catholic think, it's the mission of a smaller kind of institution that is not state run. I may be using a little the language we are using here, it's developing the whole person. They are majoring in something, Biology or German or whatever, but we are also trying to transmit a general education to them in the humanities so that they have a sense of a broader picture of life and understand the dynamics of life beyond of what they are specifically interested in. So I guess the keyword is to provide a general education.

When you look at what you've just described: In how far is that different from what people get when they take a M.A. or Ph.D., aside from content knowledge. And in how far is the B.A. different from a M.A. and a Ph.D..

Well the M.A. and the Ph.D. get very specific. General education is not the object there anymore. If you decide to get a M.A. or Ph.D. in Biology, that's what you would be concentrating on. Although the university obviously would afford you the possibility to pursue, literature for example. It's not going to help you get the M.A. in Biology though. At least in the humanities the Ph.D. has been developing more in the direction of studies, for example: I have a very specific Ph.D. in German literature. Now you get one in Germanic studies, with literature being one component of that.

So it get's broader?

Yes, it gets culturally broader. So you look at things German from a multi- and interdisciplinary perspective whereas before it was much more focused on literature. It's what in German is called "Kulturstudien". If we were to translate German Studies, we talk about "Kulturstudien".

So for example, someone getting a Ph.D. in German Literature might write on Goethe's interest in science. That wouldn't have been the case before. A traditional Ph.D. in German Literature if dealing with Goethe would have done something with regard to his literary work. Now you might deal with his literature but you would bring in some other discipline. So the person with that Ph.D. is going to know much about science, too. So it's broader.

What I want to assert is that, looking at the B.A., M.A. and Ph.D., they all perform two basic functions to a different degree. These are qualification and enculturation. Looking at these concepts, which of these are fulfilled by the B.A., M.A. and the Ph.D.?

So it was...?



### Enculturation and qualification.

So the B.A. does both and then the M.A. and Ph.D. would be more qualification oriented.

If you look at the people who are taking B.A. degrees over your experience in the last 10, 15 years, what changes, if any, have you experienced in the student body in the last years.

Students have become more practically oriented. They are more interested in qualifying themselves than they are – as a broad generalization, they were more open to the enculturation – now they are less open to that and very set on what they want to qualify themselves in.

It's a whole issue of education now here, this more traditional approach which involved developing the whole person and then students being interested in very specific things. It's an internal fight – not with acrimony – because the university is in a way a corporation and to some extent adjusting to student demand. But when it does that and goes too much in that direction, it loses its traditions and what it is set out to do and what the Jesuit mission is. So there's the administration on the one hand which is trying to attract students and has to attract students, because it's still a non-profit organization but you can't run a deficit. So you need to attract a certain amount of students and you do that with your programs, obviously.

And then those of us who are less interested in all the finances and are here for idealistic reasons and want to transmit this kind of general education. And so there is a bit of a conflict there. I think it's across the board, it's not only a problem here at our constitution. Even at a place like XIII. where students probably are even more driven to qualify themselves, they just have higher energy levels than here at XII..

Have you experienced any confrontations like this with students? When you come as a B.A. students, you pay for the whole package, not only for Introduction to English linguistics and so on, but you pay to live on campus, activities and to have a certain type of experience. Do you experience people saying: "I don't need that freshmen seminar, it's not relevant to..." and then whatever they are here to do.

I haven't had those kinds of confrontations with students. But when they leave at the end of those four years, they are required to fill out an exit survey and those kinds of things are then asked. What has come up on a regular basis is that students don't understand the general education requirements. "Why do I have to take three semesters of a foreign language?"

So there is a discussion going on here at the university that we need to make our general education requirements more coherent. We have to present them in a way that makes them understandable to students or make them more integrated. Because students often think they just have to check things off: two semesters of history, two semesters of English literature...and really these things are connected. And we need to perhaps rethink our general education requirements and have more of an interdisciplinary approach to them so that these things are not taught in isolation but are connected.

That is an extremely difficult discussion to have because there's lots of turf wars so that discussion potentially opens up a can of worms because, to take our example here where we have three semesters of foreign language requirement. The end result of this could be that we could lose a semester or gain one. It depends how this discussion goes and whether we are able to make our case.

But you'd think it's a pretty straight forward case.

Well, it's harder in the Midwest than it is in other parts of the country. There's less of a sense of urgency in learning foreign languages in this part of the country. It's geographically...it's a geographical issues. You get in a car and drive 200 miles and there's nothing but cornfields. Just to overstate the case.

Whereas in Europe you easily run up against another culture and to some extent that's the case here if you live at the fringes if you live next to Mexico or Canada. Here in the Midwest there is not that same consciousness. It's harder to make the case here than in Vermont where you are close to Canada or Texas or Southern California. Or in certain cities where the Latino population is very high. Here it's only 2% I think whereas in places like Miami it might be close to 50% or higher.

So they're obviously going to have a totally different take. So it's not necessarily a no brainer to say that we should have four semesters of...I think it's a harder fight in the Midwest than in other places. So on the one hand there's an understanding that we should reopen the discussion about the general education requirement, but on the other hand there's a certain hesitation because it's a protracted affair. The discussions will all be civil and so forth but there will be a lot of tension.

Actually I will be inserting a question here. I want to talk about admissions testing, entrance and exit exams. [European system] So when you think of entrance testing, what is your opinion on it? It's one measurement but it shouldn't be the only one. University shouldn't set an absolute bottom line in terms of these tests. There are so many other factors that play a role as to whether a student is mature enough to study. And I think most universities look at a broad range elements when they consider admitting a students.

They are also looking at their interest in other things besides academics because we are trying to establish campus life so it's not just an issue on academics. At this particular institution there's a great deal of emphasis played on community service, so if students have been active in that sense on the high school level, it's a big plus point for coming here. So I don't think it should be the only criteria.

When you think of your institution and the university as such, in what areas does university constitute itself as a community?

As a community? How does it constitute itself?

In what areas does it constitute itself. I exclude physical areas like campus. But as XII., as XI....these are all entities somehow. How do you think these entities are formed because I think they are formed deliberately, I assert.

Well, you generally have some kind of identity. At least this institution does and it's the point of departure. You'll see this as you walk across campus. Clearly we are a Jesuit Catholic institution. You see that through the ocanography, through the statues and the artwork. We have the college church around the corner which is part of campus. So that' the university's identity so most of the students that come here, obviously there's a high percentage of Catholics, that's a common denominator and a defining moment in the community. That can mean a lot of other things: religious aspect, community service aspect, there's the education aspect. We say we're giving them a Jesuit education, I'm not quite sure what that means but it means something. People come here because they want a Jesuit education, so that's how we would define our community.

Other universities do it in different ways. XV. obviously has their own connection. At XI. it might be more related to academic fields because it's a university that specializes on art and those areas so that might form part of their identity. XIII. probably in that it is a nationally ranked, very good university, so they might take it more from the intellectual side.

[campus as place providing community]

When we talk about identity, do you think there is such a thing such a national identity of higher education in the U.S.? There is a great deal of variation, that's clear. But do you think there's a national identity in the sense of a common ground? Would you speak about the American universities? Does that make any sense?

Yes, I would. And then what do I associate?

Sure.

I associate campus, a sense of community. Obviously I am biased, but I think that we have the best university system in the world. I mean there are all kinds of things you can criticize, but underneath the bottom line our universities offer enormous possibilities for our students. In a much more personalized way than in other countries. There is a certain level of pride I have to be part of this system and I associate this with the system on the whole and not just this institution. When you speak of the American university, those possibilities exist at most.

So what else would I associate? Well I guess we can talk about the problems too. It costs a lot which makes them kind of uneven sometimes in terms of quality. In Europe if you get a degree from a university...although that's changing too. If you get a degree from a university it's not less valuable than from another university. Whereas if you get a degree from Yale it's different than if you get a degree from XIV. and I think that's not the greatest situation. People look at the name of the university as a defining factor. It has some truth to it because Yale is Yale and XIV. is XIV., but on the other hand it is kind of discriminating as well. So there's that huge problem.

In connection with that problem, I wonder about the statistics. 30% percent of St. Louisans are African American, city and county combined. What can you imagine as a reason of these 30% not being reflected in the numbers of any university in St. Louis?

Well there's the social reason I think. That Afro-Americans grow up in different social circumstances so their families are not as well educated as other families, other minorities and the whites. So there's less of a tradition to study. Then there are financial reasons although there is a broad range of scholarships available they can not cover all the financial needs of Afro-Americans if they want to study. So those are the main factors.

And I think there's another factor too. If an Afro-American is looking at different institutions in St. Louis and they are all equal to him or her, like they would pay them the same at each institution. They still wouldn't necessarily pick XII. I think because of the low percentage of Afro-Americans so they are not going to find a lot of other Afro-Americans, if that is important to them and it may very well be.

In this country we also have institutions that are traditionally Afro-American. Harris-Stowe, right. They may tend toward those institutions as well. If you check them out, they are probably way over 30 or 40%.

When we talk about where students come from, automatically this idea of universal access comes up. In many key tests I found, it's said that the great thing about the American university system that it provides access for everyone who wishes to partake in it. What would your response be to this universal access idea?

I think it's more ideological than reality. An institution can tell you it provides need based scholarships so what they are saying is that if we accept you as a student, we will make it possible for you to study here. But they define what that need is. I don't know how realistic it sometimes is. I don't think equal access is true. I can imagine XII. accepting students and offering them scholarships which is simply not enough.

We'll be going through this process soon with our own daughter, where you have to fill out forms and you have to indicate what your salaries are and so on. Then the universities determine how much you can pay. Well, I don't know how universities can do that. How do they know what your personal needs are as a family? That doesn't correspond to what the university thinks you can pay.

I guess they do take things into account. They do ask you if you are making mortgage payments on your house, if you are making payments on your car. But in our case, we do a lot of traveling and it's important to our identities and our lives. So that seriously impacts how much we can pay. So does the university take that into the account? I see that as being a problematic statement to make, that there's equal access to all universities.

If I played devil's advocate. If people don't have the money but the brains, there's federal loans, Stafford loans, private loans, there are loans all over the place. I am 24, if I wanted to get a loan, everyone would give me one. That's not the issue. So people argue that if you do want to study, take out a loan.

Well, I guess in that sense there's equal access because you can get loans. But that's looking only at the objective point of view. There's a whole subjective factor which is: Do you want to settle yourself with debts to pay once you get out of school. I have seen this in our own circle of friends and other academics who spent years paying off debts and that too severely impacts how they live their lives. So in that respect it's a really dicy question because on the other hand, if they didn't do it they wouldn't have gotten their education, they wouldn't have been able to do what they wanted to do. And so I guess it's something you have to pay for and you end up with these debts. But it's not a great situation. So when you equal access to education, there's a lot of strings attached. For the people personally and that's also a discussion we're having at home: It's not only the student who takes out a loan but the parents take out loans, so do they want to saddle themselves with those debts too? These are not easy questions to answer.

This is my last thought. What I've read a lot or the sense that I got is that 100 years ago, university was an ivory tower where we search for absolute truth. We think what the ontological being is, what transcends this being and today - and I'm speaking with their voice now - we need to move away because we need to prepare people for the work place. We need to create citizenship, we need to make sure our economy is growing. So between those two perspective between what it was in the 19 hundreds and utilitarianism, where would you locate yourself and your opinion about what university could be in the future in this country?

Well, that's the challenge to still do both. You used the word citizenship. I don't see that as a utilitarian aspect of education. To be a good citizen means...I mean how can you vote today

without knowing about the environment, about other cultures, about knowing things about the business world, geography. So if you are just totally fixed on a minor topic, how are you going to make responsible choices and be a good citizen? So certainly we need to strive to continue education the whole person and to balance that – and that's the really difficult act – to balance that with what needs to be a very specific education today too because the world is so specialized. And that's the squaring of the circle.

I think that's a question we deal with every day and we never going to resolve it in a satisfactory way but we need to try to do it.

**Dr. F., Dean of Education, Institution XI.**

What is your field of research?

My area of expertise and research is early childhood education.

At this point, do you advise any thesis or dissertations?

Only from other universities.

How often do you participate in things like conferences, annual meetings?

Regularly, seems constantly. There are many professional organizations. Some I'm on the board of, some I present at, some I'm invited to speak at.

What administrative functions do you perform?

Financial management, looking at operational systems that we have both in identifying, supervising, hiring adjunct as well as full time faculty; looking at systems for advising and developing online courses, curriculum development which is done typical through the department with oversight and direction from accrediting agencies. They are looking more and more at student outcomes rather than inputs, so that takes up a lot of time.

If you look at your administrative work and you compare that to academic work, how do those relate to each other?

I spend much more time in administration. I do right now for example facilitate a student teaching seminar. I teach once a year, all deans do. The rest of the time I do administrative things, work with advisory boards, doing fundraising activities.

When you look at people who enroll in B.A. programs in general but also within your expertise, what motivates people to enroll in a B.A.?

In our case it's primarily a desire to vocation in teaching. We have some people who choose our program, a very small percentage, who don't intent on teaching in a K-12 system but get a pre-education to work in the community, in the non public sector, educational programs, informal learning institutions. But most, 98% probably want to become teachers in the K-12 range. At the graduate level we are working sometimes with people who are changing careers and get credentialed after getting a B.A. in another field. But the majority are still working practitioners who are teaching ready, have teaching degree in education at the MA level. And at the specialist level, which is a post M.A. but not a doctorate, we prepare principals and superintendents and directors of special education.

If you look at a person that graduates from a B.A. program, how could that person ideally be described?

We hope – and we know, because we are measuring - that they have achieved the goals of our program which have to do with understanding and knowledge based content knowledge, learning processes, characteristics of development, and philosophical foundations in education. We also want to know that they are able to work with community, family, other educators in a collaborative way. That they are reflective practitioners. We want to know that they understand and use a variety of forms of assessment and observation to understand learning of individuals

and groups. We also want to know that they have the ability to support and work with students across a great area of diversity so that they understand the especially children of other cultures, races, economic status and other sorts of diversity like religion, ability and disability. We also have ea program at the M.A. in ESL and working with immigrant refugees in immigrant families. It comes into play a little at the undergraduate level, but it's more likely that students study that in depth at the graduate level.

If you think about this person in the sense of an individual, what changes would you like to see from the beginning to the end of the B.A.?

We actually identify very explicitly the dispositions that we want our students to develop and they come with strong dispositions in these areas but we want them to develop. They have to do with three areas and lots of points underneath each ones as possible indicators. The first one is self-knowledge, understanding of yourself has to happen first in order to understand your own biases, your own ways of thinking and how they differ from others.

That leads to respect and openness to others, to understanding students, families, colleagues, other people in the community. Their ideas must be listened to, respected, being able to interact with them in ways that are open to dialogue. The third is commitment to professionalism and being a productive member of the community.

When you look at what you've just described for the B.A., how are these different for the M.A. and the Ph.D.?

Well, basic goals for dispositions are the same. Those are overarching principles of all our programs. In specific, at the B.A. level we are preparing teachers to be credentialed in an initial certifications through the state of Missouri. That means they have some minimal competencies. At the M.A. level we are working on advanced level competencies and relating to all those areas I've just mentioned but specializing in certain age groups and content areas. So we do have M.A. in social studies, math, educational technology. Then we have a broader category of multidisciplinary studies for people who want to broaden their knowledge base and disciplines. We have early childhood, special education and communication arts which is a content area focused on reading, language and aesthetics and art. So it's a narrower focus at the undergraduate level and then more in depth and advanced learning.

What changes if any have you seen in the students that take part in your programs over the last 10 or 15 years?

Over the last 15 years XI. has shifted its undergraduate population from being primarily older students who have had a gap in their degree program to finishing their degree to now being primarily traditional aged students coming right out of high school. We still have some of those adult learners who are pursuing the degree after being out for a while, but the majority of people are coming in as freshmen.

What goes right along with that is people with less life experience which requires them to have a need to very early get out in the field an experience what teaching would be like. We try to get them out as early as possible. In the freshmen year, they can start in our student literacy corps which is volunteered tutoring that's in the schools. They can do an early practicum but by the time they come in officially as a candidate for teacher education their very first course, "education in a diverse society", is paired with a practicum. It's located in the context of a local

area school, typically with a diverse population. That class held in that school is paired with a practicum inside that same school so they observe and interact with teachers. And of course there's a serious of further experiential learning opportunities through practicum and student teaching. But getting out in the field early is critical so that they don't waste time if they realize this is not what they want to do.

Probably a little more need for community connections, community building. Older students have their own established community and family support. The younger student needs that, to feel bonded and connected and considered in terms of their own well being.

I'm sure as a dean you are also responsible for dealing with complaints. If you look at these incidences over the times of your experiences, have these incidences changes? Are you still discussing the same type of issue today than before?

With the increase access to the internet we see more plagiarism issues. It's a phenomenon across the country and other countries. That has changed. At least we know about it because we have tools to tell us. I think probably there is more of a consumer attitude by students of "I have the right to get an A" or usually just an A, not even a B. If I do the work and show up...you know, all of this. That's not across the board, but that's a problem that serves us a little more.

And really there is an expectation, not as much at the undergrad but the grad level, where students just presume that when they do good work, they receive a good grade rather than doing superior or excellent work and getting an A.

I think in general there is just more complaints perhaps because of that issue of feeling like I come entitled to more but the quantity of that sort of complaint is more today than it was. I have only been dean for six years, but as a department chair and as an acting dean before that I did lots of these things.

What do you think is the reason? [personable profs or money]

The more we move toward accountability and transparency in assessment of students which means when they are evaluated there are rubrics indicating what they have to do to earn the grade, it should logically eliminate some of the appeals that are not based on standards of work. When it's that transparent and faculty are consistently and accurately using that kind of assessment tools and the scoring guides that go with then these things should be settled fairly quickly.

What I want to introduce in my thesis are two basic functions of really any college education in the U.S.. These are qualification in the sense of content knowledge and enculturation which means introducing the person into the culture they live in. To what degree or extend do the degrees do that?

Certainly in education it's giving them the initial teacher certification as a qualification. Probably certainly take them into enculturation of more highly educated people and hopefully a disposition to lifelong learning. That is further evidence when people come back for graduate degrees. There too we have many people taking coursework and degrees for qualification. And teach education in Missouri for example, you can't have a lifelong certificate. You get an initial certificate and there are three steps over a ten year period to get a lifelong certificate and it requires ongoing professional development. Not necessarily just university credit is professional



development but there are other ways but it's a primary one because people also move up the salary scale when they get additional credits or degrees.

So there's that practical side of it that's related to qualification. Truly there are students who have that spirit of lifelong learning and just want to learn more and more and gain additional qualifications just to be a broader, well prepared person. For example, an interesting phenomenon are the St. Louis public schools which is in terrible shape because it's unaccredited. One very visionary thing done by the recent superintendent was to negotiate with us to...the goal is to have about 100 elementary teachers get all the coursework and certification in ESL not to become teacher specialists but to remain as elementary classroom teachers with a broader base of knowledge. That's, from a superintendent's perspective, is visionary and about enculturation. From the teachers' perspective I hope it is two. We have now taken on fifty of those 100 people and offering them training. [...]

In education, I guess, I think about enculturation, I would like to see people study other things. We do offer many different content areas that are not just methodology courses but content courses and I think that's a good thing.

University as a community: where I come from we don't really have that. [...] I look at university as an organization that very consciously creates a sense of community for certain purposes. How does that happen? How is that community created? In what areas does university, and XI. constitute itself as a community?

Certainly it's stronger at the undergraduate level because of our residential students. One of the things we do across the board is having smaller classes so there's always the opportunity to build relationships. There are things at the undergraduate level that we do consciously to try to build students ability to feel like this is their home and feeling connected to people, places and things. Freshmen seminars, sports, activities on campus, residential living makes a big difference. That's a transformation for XI., because we had a limited amount of residential living in the old Loretta hall which is now renovated, but with the growth of our undergraduate population we have intentionally put up more student housing to get that sense of community.

I wonder if in the U.S., on a practical and almost cynical side, it's reacted to the fact that a private university in particular counts on its graduates to be future donors and if they don't feel a connection they won't help us and other students in the future to get similar education. In your university in Vienna is that not a concept?

No, it doesn't exist because our universities are state run. [...] This sense doesn't exist and it doesn't have to because it fulfills a different purpose.

And you don't have the competition across universities?

No, because we have an exit examination system. [...]

Here, the public institutions, state funded, are just as focused on building community because only part of their funds are paid for by the states. They still depend on donors. But they are also in competition with the private universities and I was thinking about my two week trip to India with Fulbright. We visited higher ed institutions, teacher preparation and there were other deans and directors of education across the U.S.. There were nine of us. We all brought – because it was suggested – some presents for schools. We were visiting universities, government agencies,

schools and community groups so we all brought our logoed things. We ended up giving different kinds of things away but it's absolutely true that none of the institutions required that we visited appeared to have trademarks or names on them. Each of them gave us a packet of something that had promotional info about their programs, but nothing like the bags and sweatshirts.

[students of different departments at University of Vienna]

We talked about identity. If you look at the system of higher education in the U.S. could you prescribe an identity to that or is it just too diverse and different that it depends on city and field, that a national identity does not exist?

Well, there's kind of a national identity of the elite private schools like the Harvards and the Stanfords and so on. When higher ed institutions are rated by U.S. news and world report and other groups, they look at them like the identity of the research institutions. Even by region there's many different ways to strategy universities in this country. So I guess there's ways of identifying clusters, but your question is whether there's a national identity. So probably the national kind of concept is a traditional one at the undergraduate level: young people living on campus, organizing themselves in social networks, doing their studies. It's that image. Graduate is just all over the place and now with online instruction it doesn't get any easier. That identity is the "wanna get ahead" adult learner who doesn't have time for classroom based learning and is multitasking constantly. So that is becoming a new identity for universities. So I guess there are multiple identities depending on how closely you look at it and how much experience you had with universities to know those different identities. The person who never went to college and doesn't have family or friends that are much exposed to it probably has much of that idea of the undergraduate world, but I don't know if I can give you a better answer than that.

I would like to focus on St. Louis specifically. I found that 30% of St. Louisians are African Americans as the largest community, city and county combined. No school in the area, whether private public or community college, reflects that number. I was wondering if you have an idea, explanation or a hint for why that is. [...]

Did you look at Harris Stowe?

I excluded them because they don't have M.A. programs, only B.A.. But they have an unusually high rate.

Right. So it's not representing the population at large but it's the other way round. Also Lincoln University, mid state, it has started in serving African Americans so they should have a big population. Community Colleges, did you look at them?

Yes, they have a high rate but nothing close to representing the 30%.

Well, I also thought that number should be in the 20s. But even if it's that, you never see that rate represented. We do much better with the graduate. Our MA program we have about 20% students of color and it's primarily African American. In the undergraduate level we are much worse, about 9 or 10%. Part of our case has to do with several things, obviously. One would be tuition rate, two would be that it's hard to get a corps if you don't have one. It's hard to attract students to a community who has so few students of color. At the graduate we do because we

draw a lot of teachers from the city who have access to an endowment fund for the base of their education so when they pick a university it doesn't have anything to do with funds.

And also in teacher education we compete with other professions because teachers don't get great salaries. In India, it's the huge factor there. Teachers become teachers as a second choice because they use the exit testing as the sole determination of getting into a university and if you don't pass at the very high ends, you don't get into math, science, technology and business but you might get into teacher education.

We struggle with that all the time. We're trying to recruit students of color especially at the undergraduate level where we are not doing as good of a job.

[checking numbers]

Yet when we think of diversity we think of it in the teaching field. The children in the schools in St. Louis city are 98% African American so there's even more urgency to...

[...] My proposition is that racial discrimination has been done with so I'm wondering what kind of discrimination is happening so which one is it? Numbers don't lie and it's nothing to do with a particular school, I believe. It seems to be a structural or economic problem, I'm not sure.

Well, again, we see much bigger percentage of African Americans in the city and there typically, the systems there are not supporting them in getting the level of education they need to get into higher ed. By and large, there are still pockets of excellence. The poverty, the drugs, all that continues. For instance, the poverty rates for children in the state of MO has been the same as 25 years ago or worse. I've been studying this early in my career in early childhood education looking at preschool age children living in poverty and it just never gets better. But I suppose it's that combination of factors that are contributing to...that tend to hit the African American population more but inclusive of other populations too.

We've done a lot in teacher education across the community in looking at issues of social justice and racism and in recent years we had a visiting professor for a couple of semesters whose work in California is focused on linguistics and culturally responsive teaching. So with the African American population, he focuses on African American and the Hispanic population, but he comes here and focuses on the African American population. The issue of linguistics is a critical piece because part of the achievement gap is related to the fact that children come with a home language that is not standard English and that language is not respected, not given any kind of credit when it's actually based in African foundations of language combined with white language that was imposed upon them when they come over as slaves.

Ebonics or African American language is what has surfaced and it has rules, structure and it should be respected as such. Not that it should substitute for standard English but we're trying to help teachers see the legitimacy of that language structure and give value to it and help children decode rather than correct them. It's a different way of working with kids and help them become cogniscent of the structure. Because that links to anytime one learns a language structure well, even if it's the first language, it's easier to learn foreign language structures better.

We find even the African American students who come to our program, often times writing is a real problem for them. It's clear in that population more so, it's still a problem in other areas but more so with African American students. That's why we brought in a consultant because we have to give a value to it but also insist upon the good usage of standard English. That can get in

the way of people qualifying. If they have to write an essay to get into a school, they're not going to.

Testing, SAT, ACT, many people who are poor in language don't read the test well and can't answer because of their reading problems. So that contributes to it. We had a young professor from...it's a state university in Maryville, MO, and he was doing some studies of testing issues for students with linguistic problems and it was clear that was a major factor and they developed programs that became effective in helping them improve their scores.

So all those things, language, poverty, drugs, poor educational background.

Seems all those factors that you point out are socio-economic factors. [GRE] I guess the culmination of the last question that I was trying to build was the claim that the American university is an all access university representing an all access society. [...] And then there's the other side that says yes you can get a loan and you can do all that, but to get to that point if you are not a majority student, you face trouble and that's nothing to do with money. So my question to you is: do you believe that the American university is an all access system?

Probably not, from that point of view. It still takes a lot of knowledge and persistence and know how to get to the point of accessing the universities as you said. In acknowledgement of that we've done some small scale efforts who don't have the family structure and the system behind them to negotiate ways of getting into university. We've had grand programs in business and technology. We've got one funded by energizer and its come out of their school to offer a series of weekend experiences on campus, not necessarily to get kids to come here although that would be nice, to help them understand things like test taking and financial aid, sitting in on a classroom just to feel how it is and that's not a scary things and all sorts of other things that would help them understand university life and get to the point of entry.

Those have been very successful, they are small scale but he reported that out of 30 students who did this 26 went on to college, some here some somewhere else. I don't know if the criteria was to be African American, I think it was just from the city.

Then there are internship programs and we're still working on trying to develop one through the city. Juniors and seniors come into a summer internship in corporate location, businesses and industry but we're trying to do one in education. Those kinds of efforts seem to have track records trying to help students breaking the barriers but they're small scale. There's always the recruitment teams that go out in the schools and provide the support services, but they're short term, one shot kinds of things and they aren't typically that effective.

What's your take on the American loan system. I've heard a lot of devil's advocates saying that if it's 35,000 so what? Take out a loan, pay it back and that's what the American average student does.

Yeah, I think there's some irresponsibility there. People should never come out of school with that much loan and debt. It's setting them up for long term failure. We have to take responsibility for advising. There are people and I can name some from my own experience who took our advice saying "Don't continue to do this" because typically the ones who have huge loans...I don't know if typically, but just the ones I know of, are people who are just not facing the fact that they just can't get through. They take more loans, take more coursework and they're not getting to their goal because they just cannot pass or barely pass.

But I agree, I mean you didn't say this but there's too much loan debt that people are coming out of school with and that I think as a mother I wouldn't want my child to start out in life with that because it's hard enough to get by without that loan debt. I don't know what your original question was...

It's probably reflective of the whole mindset of this country when we think about the home loan mortgage problems because that mindset that it's ok to have lots of loans. Living on the edge.

**Dr.M., Assistant Professor for Germanic Studies, Institution XIII.**

What is your field of research?

The discipline I work in is German studies but I work on German Jewish studies and Holocaust studies, mostly literature.

At this point, do you advise and thesis or dissertations?

Yes, because I just got tenure this year I have now a dissertation student. I just picket up an exchange student who is going to write his M.A. with me and I have two honors thesis.

How often do you attend conferences, annual meetings etc?

I usually do two a year, sometimes three but three is more than I can usually handle.

When you look at a work day, how much of the work is administrative and how much is your original academic work?

Does teaching counts as administrative?

Teaching would count as academic but student meetings more toward administrative.

Ok, that's kind of hard to say because every day is different. I teach three days a week so of those I would say it's probably 60 – 70% is administrative and the rest is research and teaching. On the days I stay home it probably flips over.

When you look at the students that you've seen over your academic career, what is your take on the reason people decide to get a B.A.?

That has changed over my career because I was a student ho paid my way through college and I went to state universities. At that time in some families it was expected and in some it was seen as a way to climb the economic ladder. When I came here it was different because there isn't that feeling that they have to climb up because they are pretty much solidly middle to upper middle class so it's really about expectations, to be educated and to be prepared for further study. So many of our students go on to medical school, law school and graduate school.

So I think it depends on the institution. If you were to go to an inner city, state or just down the road to University Missouri in St. Luis, the reasons would be very different.

If you look at people coming out of a B.A., they know more about their content but there is something else going on as well. What do you think as changed the student from starting his B.A. to finishing her B.A. other than knowing more about content?

In my discipline specifically you mean?

Well, probably what ideally should happen.

What ideally should happen and this is where I stand with most of my colleagues, I would like to feel that they have developed critical thinking skills. That's the big thing. So that when they graduate they feel like they are ready to take the world on, listen to a presidential debate, analyze it, know what's going on and not just being taken in by sort of flash and emotion. Especially for those of us in the humanities and language, it's about looking at language and seeing how it's used in the media and in their daily lives so that's it's not just about the workplace. I don't think

much about preparing my students for the workplace other than instilling in them discipline and respect and the idea that they have to come to class and be prepared like you would on a job. But otherwise I don't worry about that. It's more about preparing them to be responsible citizens.

What I want to suggest in my thesis is that two things happening in every degree, really. I'm leaving out professional degrees here. So there's qualification in terms of knowledge but the other portion is enculturation in terms of making you part of something other than what you are naturally part of, like family etc. If you look at these two functions, what degree in the U.S. fulfills what function?

I really think that depends on the discipline and the students. I can say that the biggest major in the U.S. is business, as I understand it that's the number one undergraduate major. Number two is probably psychology I think. Those students who go to business school, they have a very pragmatic view and they go for qualification. But what we find here, we have students who are premed and prelaw and business, they are often looking for that meaningful second major and that's what German can be for them. They enjoy it, they learn a lot about another culture and I think for students that's often secondary.

But that again is a thing about class because if you are already solidly in the upper middle class, you can afford to major in German and wonder what you are going to do after graduation. If you are in a class situation where you really have to take advantage of the four years and you're or your parents are paying a lot or you're borrowing a lot, then the idea is that qualifications be number one. I don't know what a business professor would say. Maybe a business professor would say that he's looking for them to be qualified number one. But in German we're looking to getting them to have some facility in the language, that's a qualification. That's kind of the practical think.

I'm really looking at the enculturation. I think that's much more important, to give them the sense that there's a whole meaning to it. I don't know if I'm making sense or not...

Sometimes these two thing coincide and sometimes they bump up against each other. In my field, across the board in the U.S., we are in a crisis. We have fewer numbers, fewer people are interested in taking German partially because the educated people of German people countries speak English and there is the sense that why do you need to learn German. Middle Eastern languages, Chinese, those become the in languages and few people see that value of this. So one of the things we are constantly thinking is: How are we educating our student over and above just educating them in the language. And there's this focus on enculturation. Trying to get them to be aware of who they are as Americans vis a vis the world.

Do you think that changes in terms of the level of education? Is there more enculturation or qualification happening when you go to the M.A. or Ph.D. level?

That's a good question. A little bit, yes. But in some level it's more open on the undergrad level. I remember being an undergraduate thinking what I wanted to do and I took all these classes that opened up the world to me. Then you get to a M.A. and Ph.D. program and it's so narrow. In our department it is about looking at German culture, literature, theoretical models, critical thinking but it narrows in again and really some of those larger issues of educating people for the world, it stays in the background. Part of that is because generally speaking, we are educating our M.A. and Ph.D. students to be professors. We hope that they've broadened themselves and then they come here and get that depth. I think the idea of education in America is that you pick it up and

you really have that experience in that intense four years and the rest is polishing skills like you said in qualification. Of course there is enculturation in academia and that's what we are doing with the grad students. Because we are really educating them about this in group of academics rather than going out...it's a very different culture. And for undergraduates, that culture is opaque, they don't understand how it works.

If you look at all the students you had in your career, have you noticed any changes in the student body?

Yes. I've been here for seven years and before that I did my graduate work at the University of Virginia and I taught there for eight years and it's different because there's a different student body. So I'll focus on the University of Washington students.

I haven't seen a huge change although I do think that there are students who increasingly – and it's not as negative as it sounds but it's negative – egocentric. I feel that through the change in high school education and the way children are raised now they are encouraged to think of themselves as the center of the university. Through this wave of self esteem teaching, they don't see themselves as much as part of a collective. I really notices the difference when I taught at a German university. They have a sense of themselves as a collective. In fact, they are an anonymous collective, nobody knows their names. I know all my students' names by the second week of class. It's also a private university thing, we can afford to give them personal attention.

But I do think that there is something about the way in which American education is going. It becomes more about the individual student's preferences rather than trying to adapt to the standards of the discipline. So that you have a students who will come up to you and say if you give him or her a B on a paper, he or she will say "I worked hard on that paper so I deserve an A" as if effort equals achievement. Rather than saying that there are the standards I have to reach they come to you and argue about that. It's not a lot and we have very good and respectful students, but every once in a while you get that. We encourage that also because we meet with the students, we give them individual attention. We give them the idea that they are individually important and that's good, but in general I think it's a generational thing. It's sort of the fallout from the 60s which is a real narcissism and that's one thing I'm a little concerned about and I struggle with that because I want the students to know that they are individually important to me but at the same time they are a collective and this is a structure. They have to pay their dues that way.

I know that you haven't heard much of that before but that's my personal take on it.

Well, actually a lot of people pointed out that they sense this sense of entitlement that is out there and it's interesting that you attribute that to a generational process. Most attribute that to the fact that people pay and are customers in which case they determine the way in which we communicate and how we work. That means that I'm a B.A. student but I can tell you that this is worth an A. Lots of people pick up on that.

That's interesting and it would be interesting got talk to colleagues from state universities if it's the same sense of entitlement or if paying this much tuition makes a difference. I tend to think that it does affect it but I think it's a generational thing and I think it comes from the increasing cultural individualism. This idea that everybody's listening to their own iPod rather than sharing collective musical experience. That is starting to affect things. You see it more now.



And sometimes that is really good. We have students who really have a sense of themselves, but sometimes it goes overboard to this entitlement.

When you look at people who graduate from XIII., I think there's a strong sense of identity. It means something, much more than if you say I went to XIV. or XI. or so. To me that means that there is something more created than just an institution that you go to and come out of.

That is also a particularly American thing, that identification with your institution. That happens with a lot of state universities. I get all the alumni newsletters, they're trying to get me come to their events. I think that here it's branding really. When you walk in you see the XIII. sign on the building and I think we foster that. It's the idea that this is somewhat a special environment. And I think that's probably true for a lot of private institutions, also Harvard and Yale. XI. has a much broader mission as is the mission of many state universities, again focusing on the collective. Here it's more a special thing and you're special because you are here.

A lot of our students come from the East coast, they travel to St. Louis, they are sort of pioneers coming to that special place. The administration and the faculty is aware of that and we foster that idea and it sort of mirrors each other.

In what ways is that community created?

I don't see many of the most important steps, because they don't have that in the academic arena. But this year I was asked to participate in the convocation for freshmen at the beginning of the year. Maybe there's 20 or 30 faculty with the academic robes, they march. All the freshmen and their parents come but the freshmen sit together in their residential colleges, their dorms, that they have lived in for a day or so. And they wear the t-shirts of the dorms and the residence assistants teach them their own cheer, so before the ceremony begins it's like a pep rally. It was stunning to me when during the program the faculty advisors for the dorms were announced and the whole dorm would stand up and cheer. They've been there a day but identification is set up the summer before through mailings and this freshmen come to campus. But it's harnessed in a way that stunned me and I think some of those things happening in the residence hall. That transfers over to the academic arena.

Probably most of where that comes from is outside the classroom. And then a part of that comes from XIII. being highly ranked in several disciplines and the students know that, and it feeds on this pride and it just kind of snowballs. And they are at the age when they are looking for something to identify with.

It's sold, exactly. In comparison to many European universities where you don't advertise and you don't try to attract students because in a way you have too many already. Here, you open up the New York Times and they had an education issue last week with ads for colleges and universities. [smalltalk]

If you go to the XIII. bookstore, half of the store is sweaters and t-shirts. The chancellor gave us this for participating in the convocation, so even the faculty has these little XIII. things. We're caught up in this frantic thing and the students love it. It creates the identification with the university that you don't see in European universities. They do often like their university but it's not the same sort of passion and it partially is because we are out there recruiting.

[admission, selection in EU universities]

I remember this. The students who were trying to run around, collecting these Scheine for the exams. You don't have to do that here, it's all laid out for you. I am for the first time a four year advisor and I meet six times a year with my five freshmen. The attention is incredible. I don't even remember having an advisor as an undergraduate. They e-mail me, I e-mail back.

We do it for them and these things-..it's very true that students are really in a controlled environment that they are guided through. At a state university you have an advisor, but it's not the same kind of service.

[smalltalk]

The idea also that once you go to the university, you are in charge of your finances. Often you make money, get a job, live in an apartment or a dorm and that's your life. It's not this idea of living in the dorm and then going home for the summer. Here, their parents still control their money and it's different. It's sort of high school on their own.

I looked at statistics a lot and the largest minority in St. Louis are African Americans, 30% city and county combined. Non of the institution, however, reflect that percentage.

Have you looked at Harris-Stowe because they probably...

I had to exclude them because they don't have M.A. and they didn't respond to me.

And that would be a traditionally black institution. But you're right. It's a huge problem This is pretty much a country wide problem and it makes itself known very strongly in St. Louis because of this huge divide between the predominantly African American city and the predominantly white county. The way that the economics bear out. What is the percentage of African American students at XIV.?

A lot higher than at any others but still nowhere near.

Right, I don't how it reflects African American in higher education in general.

They are underrepresented. The fact is: they're not any less qualified or less educated and my question is: What's your guess for the reason?

The problem is that for example in the city of St. Louis. African Americans are concentrated mostly in the city and the city government is poor. The schools are atrocious, they are really bad. Whether they are really that bad or the image of them is bad, the fact is that a high school degree from St. Louis school doesn't mean the same as a degree from the county. Going to prepare for college then, that really matters, where you get your degree. And the services provided to the students in the city, there aren't many counselors, there aren't as many people helping first generation students to figure out that system because it's a very complicated system with the SAT and how you apply and rolling admission. There isn't that kind of help in city schools but there is the help in suburban schools and private schools.

Two generations ago, that wasn't a problem. There were many first generation college students, that was the GI bill. Now, if your parents didn't go to college, you are so much less likely to go to college. Higher education is much less progressive than it used to be.

Class matters at university. For those students who go to a place like XIII. who aren't from the middle class, it's a very difficult experience for them. We have very wealthy students there are assumptions made about your preparation in high school. Even for students who have been well

trained and are qualified, it's very daunting to have to encounter that. And I think that's part of the problem. From my own experience I can say that if your parents aren't encouraging you to college, it's almost unlikely that you'll go. If they don't know what colleges there are, they don't know how to encourage you. And that's a huge problem with the African American population in St. Louis, that there isn't information out there. There aren't people trying to help.

I thought about this a lot because we have some incredible employees on campus, African Americans, who work in service positions. And I thought about perhaps a service to help their children with not just tutoring, but getting them to campus, getting them to see what is all about. So they can start thinking about college in sixths and sevenths grade so it become part of planning, it becomes self understood that's what they're going to do. Then when it's time it's not such a big chunk. But if you don't have anybody telling you what it's all about, then it becomes this other culture. And that is a huge problem in St. Louis, this idea that this culture isn't accepting or welcoming. To a certain extent, I think that's a problem.

And then the economic distinction between African Americans and Caucasians is huge. Just economically affording college it is very problematic.

I live in the city in an African American neighborhood and I'm very aware of leaving home and coming here, it's very noticeable.

It seems divided because a lot of people publish articles saying that in the 60s we had mass education and now around 2000 we are grateful to experience this momentum of universal access. Basically, everyone who has the brains and who is willing to do it can because there's this huge industry. So if you're saying that you don't have the money to go then it's really just an excuse. So my question to you is: Do you think it's a universal access system?

No, absolutely not. I don't think it's universal access. I think even the idea of coming here and borrowing the entire tuition, I mean imagine the debt. To take on that kind of debt and not knowing what their chances are because they don't have any people in their family who are lawyers or bankers.

State universities are different and there is still somewhat access to state university. When I went to college, they had grant and the government would kick in some money so I graduated from college with 20,000 dollars of loans which is pretty good. But at the University of Texas, the tuition is 500 dollars a semester so that money was really just for my living expenses.

You're right, you can get loans but I don't think that makes it universal. Maybe it makes it universal access but that doesn't mean that everybody is prepared to go. The problem is the huge divide between high school and college education and trying to bridge that gap. If you're employed at XIII. for a certain number of years, your children can come to XIII. for free and it keeps a lot of people in lower positions even they are not paid well. But that benefit is worth if. But your kid still has to get into XIII.. So that's the problem.

[Austrian elections, study fees]

But I do think that it changes things for people when you have to pay so much for tuition and lending expenses. I know that we give a lot of money out to students. Most of our students don't pay for everything themselves, but it's still difficult to negotiate that system if you have no experience with it. It's daunting for students. Would be interesting to talk to admissions people about that because I know we try to get African Americans, it's a minority.

[admissions people at XII.]

Exactly, they don't have iPods or cars. Right and that's the problem. At the flagship state universities it's probably the same thing. You have middle and upper middle class people go there but at XIV. or community colleges are much more accepting but those often don't have that campus experience. It's tiered and I think about it. I'm very fortunate to work here, it's a wonderful place to work. I have a great job, I really have a chance to get to know my students, but it bothers me sometimes that I'm at this wealthy university.

It's a whole industry, really. I just took my GRE....[...]

Yeah, it's about signing up and knowing how to take it. Exactly. And then for the college students, they look at grades but also volunteer experience, extra curricular activities, you have to write an essay. They're looking for this esoteric mix where you don't know what it is. It's daunting.

It's a lot more different at state universities, it's more about grades and having certain standards. Again, it's like a completely different world just a couple of metro stops away.

There's an exchange student from Tübingen and I asked him how he feels and he says the level of work for any given class here is so different. For four years you're punched in the face and you're out. In Europe, you take a little longer at university. You don't have to read a thick novel for a class meeting and I think sometimes too that the intensity is hard to keep going.

I taught a class at XII. the other day and the students were very different than they are here. Our students are so earnest and well prepared. I also think it's true that the population is...For a lot of places, college is much more of a social experience and here it's a very academic, egg head university. Parts of me likes it parts of me doesn't but the expectations are high across the boards and I sometimes wonder that after four years, what do they have to show?

**Dr.S., Department Head of Romance Languages, Institution XIII.**

What is your field of research?

Yes, my field is Latin American literature and culture with focus on the Caribbean and especially Cuba.

Are you advising any thesis or dissertations at the moment?

Yes, I'm co-directing at least four or five dissertations and I'm a reader on about ten or eleven.

How often do you participate in conferences or annual meetings?

It's not a typical moment for me because of my administrative role as department chair, so my conference participation is probably less than it is when I'm not chairing. On average I'd say two to three when I chair and three to five when I don't chair.

If you look at all your work, how much of your day is reserved for administrative functions and academic work? Teaching I'd count as academic work.

Then it's 75% administrative and 25% academic. I have a course reduction. Normally I'd be teaching two courses each semester. Chairs get one and one and I also get a reduction because I am editing a journal I'm going to show you. It's a publication that we have here. It comes out three times a year. Just so you have an idea. It's a lot of work and nobody wants to do it.

Do you teach undergrad or grad classes?

When I don't chair I teach two and two out of four. We also have classes here that are mixed. The 400 level classes here are undergraduates who are advanced and then graduates. So typically it would be one undergraduate, one graduate and two mixed. Since I'm chairing it's only class I teach is a graduate class.

Over the years of your experience, what is your feeling is the undergraduate's motivation to get a B.A. in the first place?

XIII. has become a very competitive and a very selective school. It has really improved in terms of quality of undergraduate education since I've been here for exactly 20 years. Since 95 and 96 we've noticed a great improvement in academic quality of students. A large part of our students are still very much interested in premed because XIII. has such a strong medical schools. Those who actually end up in language classes or become majors in Spanish have that professional ambition. I think that international dimensions are important especially for those students we see in language classes. They realize that we are in a global world.

In general I think there's a very pragmatic motivation. Very seldom will we have just someone who is specializing in a language major. They will add something more practical like economics, psychology, biology, you name it. And I don't think it's just about making more money when they graduate, but they just think that they will enhance their chances of getting a good job. For the sheer love of learning in terms of broad liberal arts, it's not the most obvious motivation but I think you do find students who go beyond the minimum you ask them to do. But at the same time they are so overwhelmed with the amount of work that they get that sometimes the joyful exploration just for the sake of learning is not there. So I'd say they are very practical.

So when you look at a person who has gone through a B.A. program, how would they come out of it, ideally? What has changed between applying and graduating?

I think that definitely they acquire some, in general, American students even though they drive at 15 and 16, are independent and move away from their families so quickly, they are actually quite immature in terms of just every day logistics. They acquire some of that in college because they have to. It's still a pretty protected environment. There's a lot of advising, a lot of safety nets so the process of maturing and becoming more independent is maybe not as fast as a big state university where you have to do it and nobody is holding your hand.

The process of maturing in Latin American and Europe that takes place earlier is probably happening during that time. They are probably more worldly, more aware of the dimensions of the world beyond their immediate surroundings. We still get quite a few students from the Midwest who tend to be locally oriented but we also get students from ... and these are students who don't have to go such a long road to become worldly.

There's a huge emphasis on writing across the curriculum. It's amazing how many of our actually very strong undergraduates come with rather minimal writing skills. And I'm not saying writing a sentence or paragraph, but putting together a well structured argument or paper. Not even in French or Spanish but your own language. A lot of them are struggling with it and that definitely improves when you look at outcomes. These are the most obvious areas.

What I want to introduce in my thesis are two functions in higher education in general. One is qualification in terms of knowledge and then enculturation in terms of other processes that are taking place. When you look at the B.A., MA and Ph.D., what function happens more in which program?

That's an excellent question and it's probably very discipline oriented once you get to a Ph.D. level. Both M.A. and Ph.D. in foreign languages do emphasize and acquisition of certain skills. At the main level you become qualified to teach foreign languages at the high school level and you also have to acquire a local state license as you want to teach in a private school.

For us the Ph.D. are almost exclusively geared toward going into academia. It's probably very different in natural sciences where they work for the industry and the private sector. There, they are focused on skills higher than in our case where we still look at the whole person. Someone who is able to look at the context of the culture but also be able to convey that to students. We produce teachers and scholars in a way and it would be unwise to separate those areas.

At the BA level, even though you are supposed to emerge with a host of skills, it's still some kind of general education and it's about the college experience. The fact that they have to do certain things on their own: go abroad, they learn certain things first hand. I think I didn't give you a straight answer but I think I don't have one.

When you look at the student you've dealt with over the last years, what changes, if any, have you experienced in the student body?

I think this place is not very typical. In the 80s and early 90s when I first came here, if you looked at the statistics – and now we know how selective the battle to get into the best college is and how important the rankings are – XIII. as the liberal arts parts was ranked probably in the mid 20 or 30 among U.S. institutions. The rankings have gone up to 9 and 12, so that's an incredible improvement because everybody else was not just standing there waiting for us to improve, they were trying to improve too so it's really more dramatic than it sounds.

So the most tangible measure of this is the selectivity and how many students of those who apply get in. It used to be 60 percent and now it's between 15 and 20. Obviously they manipulate numbers, how many applicants, how many accepted, how many really come here. But it's one of the most selective schools among the top 10 or 15 in the country.

The way it happened where investments in undergraduate education, the infrastructure is beautiful. It's a school with a rare combination of research oriented university and at the same time, if you're not a great teacher, you won't last here. So a lot of things going on there that made it happen.

So what I see first of all is that the students are definitely much stronger intellectually. They come from a more diverse geographical background. I think the economic diversity has not changed as dramatically as I would have liked to have seen it. It's still a school that is not as ethnically diverse as some of the schools we compare ourselves too and obviously they are working on that.

I think that the competitive streak in the students has definitely increased. They are more driven, more focused, they will dispute their grades because they know it's important if you want to go to law school, business school, medical school. It doesn't mean that they will just fight for the grades and don't do anything to improve them but there is this element of real strong competitiveness.

Because the student body has improved in terms of their academic qualities, it's hard sometimes for the freshmen to realize that they come from a school where they were in the top 10% and they look around: everybody is like that. So all of the sudden they are not the big fish among the small, but the other way round. That sometimes causes problems.

Another thing that I think has changed tremendously and I don't know how much it is common in other universities. It used to be that the faculty was much more directly involved in freshmen advising; now it's much more involved in major advising. And now there's a whole team of assistant and associated deans, essentially administrators, who are guiding students through the freshmen year and beyond. It's good and bad because obviously they know what they are doing. Sometimes in terms of what the requirements are and how to best study and so on. Sometimes they don't quite know the intellectual content of the courses. So there's a little of an imbalance there.

Another point that people have pointed out is that there's a much stronger sense among students in terms of what they can demand. That they are more a customer who pays for a service they have a right to demand.

I would absolutely agree with that. I think it's become such a part of our culture that we don't even notice it anymore. There's a sense of entitlement: "I'm paying, therefore I demand" and I think at a private institution like this one it's even stronger than a state institution.

There is still an extremely strong parental involvement, because parents are the ones who are footing the bill and sometimes – it goes hand in hand with the immaturity of some students who will complain to the parents rather than to resolve the issue themselves. At the same time, the parents are the last ones to give up and are very contentious. Usually, you know it involves "What do you mean?" – "Well, he missed 11 out of 30 classes but he still should get an A-". I mean I'm exaggerating. The fact that their babies can't do wrong and should be protected...

So definitely that sense of them being clients and customers is reflected very much in the way student evaluations and course evaluations are formulated. They want to be pleased, entertained,

they want to have fun. And we also in a way cater to that by asking questions on student evaluations that go along these lines. I absolutely agree.

You mentioned diversity in student body. I've done some numbers for St. Louis. African Americans, city and county combined, are 30% of the whole population. No institution in St. Louis represents that percentage. I'm from Europe and maybe I don't see some things as clearly. How come his percentage is not represented?

I think the real question is not at the college level but at the Kindergarten and elementary school level. I think it's the disastrous state of public schools not only here but nationwide. People like me chose to spend whatever money I can summon to send my kids to private schools because the public schools in the area where we live, I like and that is a very diverse neighbor hood, those schools are failing and have been failing for over 15 years. They used to be very strong.

The fact that you have people who drop out at different stages of the trajectory, that only the smartest and the most motivated and the ones who probably have family support make it, I think it's a very big issue. I don't think that the actual structure of financial aid at the college level is an issue. I think that's where the need for diversity is so obvious that there are resources, maybe not to 100%, but to accommodate a diverse body in terms of ethnic and economic background, but it's almost too late. The poll you're dealing with already has been reduced through all these stages. I don't know if St. Louis is in this regard worse or better or the same, but my guess is that in places where the public schools are better, the result is that more people end up in college. Not necessarily local colleges.

The next question is how many of these people who go to college want to leave St. Louis. There's this local lore that a lot of people leave St. Louis and come back. There's this pull back but my son got to XIII. where he could've gone free because I'm a faculty here. If that was the only school where he had gotten in he would have. But he wanted to go away as far as possible, even Chicago was too close. There is this sense of exploring beyond this closeted, protected, everybody knows it all...it has a small town mentality. That may be an issue for some students. But there might be many more things that I'm not thinking about.

It's interesting because people point out that racial discrimination has been dealt with but socio-economic discrimination is still there. If you're not upper class, it's probably not going to happen and African Americans in St. Louis are mostly not upper class.

Probably a place like Atlanta would be an interesting counterpoint, because there you have a substantial middle and upper class African American population.

Really just two more questions that I have. A lot of scholars claim that American academia is such a great thing because it has overcome discrimination and because it's a universal access system. Everybody who is smart enough and who wants to, can go. If you don't have the money you take out and there's tons of opportunities. What is your opinion: Do you think the American higher education system provides universal access?

No, I wouldn't go that far at all. I think that precisely because of the inequalities that happened before we can't speak of universal access. Even if you are smart but your potential hasn't been developed because you have not been taught to read and right when you were supposed to and you haven't had enough support with for example this enormous machinery of testing which I think is very biased toward people who have additional – even with the best education they get in



the public schools, there's a whole layer of tutorials and buying additional help and focusing on this testing obsession. Even if you are really smart and intelligent but you don't have the additional layer of help, sure you'll get into college but probably not the most selective and the one of your choice.

I also think that the system of universal access, sure there's diversity in terms of financial...I mean you don't have to go to XIII. and pay 50,000 dollars a year. You can go elsewhere and pay a fraction of it. In state education and places like California where you still get good education although they continue to be in trouble. But I still think that one of the best commodities that is not available to everyone and perpetuates certain patterns from generation to generation is access to information. Education of the parents themselves who perhaps are not aware of certain options and possibilities there. So I really think it doesn't necessarily trickle down to every smart and motivated person.

At the same time, I think the fact that there is such a variety of options makes it less equal. In Europe, I grew up in socialist Poland and it was all public schools, free through university. I was another problem there, connections. You're getting in certain things because your father knew so and so and you could be dumb.

I mean there's much less here. There's the legacy issue. My father went to Yale and gave millions to build a building so when I apply to Yale I'll probably get in. But I think it's much less.

So that fact that there's an array of options and possibilities, it perpetuates some of these inequalities. If you end up at Meramec community college because that's what you can afford and you come out of and your counterpart ends up at Yale, of course you emerge with these degrees already from an unequal footage.

XIII. experiences a strong sense of community. It means something to have gone here, to be a XIII. man or woman. Apparently, American universities do a good job at instilling a sense of community. So my question is: How is this done here?

I think it's perceived that way by less prominent counterparts like someone who is at XIV. or even at XI., but I think XIII. has a tremendous complex of inferiority because it compares itself to Harvard, Yale and Princeton. And it's not Harvard, Yale or Princeton. And I think that has been changing as we built our own sense of identity, but I think it's still a place that's a follower rather than a leader. And I think it's unfair to demand that they become a leader. Harvard has been around for several centuries and it has been Harvard and money speaks loudly and there are certain things they can do and they have alumni who give even more and the cycle continues.

But I think the sense of community and pride is usually focused on something tangible. I think that sports is such an important part of American life. You have this team and you get associate with it and you build this sense of community around it. At XIII. I think we're still looking for ways to assert ourselves as XIII.. Nationally, it's a bit of a struggle because it's in the Midwest, nobody knows if it's in Seattle or Washington D.C. I'm exaggerating a little bit but not too much, so I think it's still in the making.

I can tell you better how it's done at the level of faculty and staff rather than students who come and go. It's still this kind of Midwestern, friendly approach, personal and often informal. The university itself does not formalize things in a bureaucratic structure. You pick up the phone and call the dean and they will reply. My counterparts in other universities say they are still waiting to hear from the dean, it's been two weeks. That would not happen here. That kind of friendly,

collegial sense that makes you feel like you're part of the community. People know each other, it's small enough. With the students, I don't know so I'm not going to second guess that.

[story of how she came to U.S.]

**Dr. C., Associate Professor for Anthropology, Institution XIII.**

What is your field of research?

Social and cultural anthropology.

At this point, do you advise any theses or dissertations?

I have two beginning grad students so yes, but they're not writing yet. They'll be writing a thesis for their Ph.D..

How often do you participate in conferences, annual meetings?

Three times a year. Annual meetings of our associations is once a year and then there's the Latin American studies conference every 18 months. Other university organized conferences, one or two a year.

The total time you spend working, how much of that time is administrative work and academic work?

Where does teaching and advising students fit in? Administrative?

Yes, I'd say so.

Probably two days a week on a good week. I'm looking at my calendar, because I keep track. About two days a week, if I'm lucky, I do my own work. So 40%, the rest is teaching and other tasks.

Do you teach undergrad or grad?

Both.

When you think about your undergraduate students, people you have seen over the last years of your career. What's your guess why people get B.A. degrees?

In Anthropology or in any?

Any field.

Well B.A. degrees for student populations I have contact with is basically no question. It's basically a fact of life where people see it as a necessity, at least for middle and upper class. So it's almost...I don't even know what sort of decision making goes into it. It's almost a non decision. It's just accepted as inevitable. Obviously that is not the entire U.S. population, but I don't know the people for whom it becomes an actual decision. Does that answer your question? I'm not sure if it makes sense.

Here the big decision becomes whether they get an advanced degree.

Have you taught somewhere else?

Well I was a teaching assistant at Harvard and there it was basically the student population where it wasn't a decision. Now, getting a B.A. in Anthropology is kind of a decision, because the atmosphere is very professionally oriented these days, especially at XIII..

Does that mean practical?

Practical also, but basically it's a pre-med, pre-law university or pre-business. So majoring in Anthropology is usually a second major. It's something they like but not something they'll live off of and that's probably true. Not a lot of our undergrads are going to grad school for Anthropology. At least not now, we would like that to happen some day.

So as far as the professionalization thing, that's the big trend I see in undergrad education. And I'm sure you're familiar with it yourself, I mean XI....

Well, I don't study there but I was a grad assistant for German. [...] When you think of a person starting a B.A. program and one coming out of it, what would you like to be the difference aside from content?

That goes again to that issue of professionalization. There's a big debate in higher education now about the shift toward a logic of business competition, early professionalization. So a med student is pressured from the first day of college to start taking advanced bio courses which means they can graduate without a deep knowledge of humanities or literature. Even languages aren't required at XIII. or Anthropology or whatever. It's a shift away from the traditional humanities, arts and science focus, liberal arts focus that I'm sure people have written on this.

Basically the effect is that you'd like to see students coming out well rounded but it looks like a lot of students manage to get out and they're already deeply immersed in a single technical field. Which means that there's a decline of the traditional education. It also means that university resources are being redirected away from German, literature, not so much Anthropology, but...which responds to a business mentality rather than a sort of an education mentality.

Shifting away from looking only the B.A., but the M.A. and Ph.D., leaving aside all professional degrees. We assume for a minute that the two basic functions of higher ed are qualification [...] and enculturation [...], what degree does which?

Well, that would just be a perception thing and I probably have to think before I gave an intelligent answer but just off the cuff: I'd say they are related functions. Even training, skills and technical college is a mode of enculturation. It enculturates a professionalized identity very early. But in my own experience the enculturation part was the undergrad degree, 80%. At least in Anthropology I couldn't have had a job with Anthropology.

But with the changes going on that may be shifting. This is what is happening. Enculturation doesn't even happen anymore, it's only skills and knowledge.

In Europe, this whole enculturation piece is almost not there. We don't do dorms, cheering for teams, wearing T-shirts etc.

So enculturation in the sense of this university life sense...?

I guess enculturation into society, into American culture however we want to define that.

That still goes on despite the professionalization. Sure the university spirit thing is part of your forming, your identity based on the university life. But one aspect I never experienced but I see now looking back is the function of fraternities and sororities and other types of clubs. It plays a big role, I think in to enculturating students into the kind of middle, upper middle class culture with functions and networking and organizing events. The managerial class that most students will become part of is a big part of that university life.

Yeah, I don't know how it's changing here. You've talked to more people, I'm locked in this little cell.

It seems what is done here in the B.A. is done in high schools in Europe. And that's because we have an exit examination system rather than an entrance examination system. [...]

Well that's certainly different.

It seems that getting a B.A., aside from people who it is normal for, to be a door into Well as I said, at a place at XI. they probably have a different population where there are a lot more first generation students. They have a totally different experience. Here we don't see that. It's an expensive, private school. Most kids are second and third generation college students. It's almost certainly seen as a necessity in life. I think it's not so much class mobility but maintaining class position, privilege, being like your parents more or less. So as far as the enculturation, it's almost a necessity step in credentialing people who are already in a privileged position.

When you get the M.A. and Ph.D. level, do you see enculturation happening or is it only qualification?

Well, then it becomes a different kind. You do your little distinction thing. You have to learn how to operate as an academic, relatively intelligent conversations, which magazines you read or not read, who you can quote and not quote, whether or not you see the symphony. Those types of enculturation which I don't really thrive at.

There's a big concern with your identity. You are sort of pedigree at the M.A. and Ph.D. level. That certainly is still a big part of it.

When you look at the students you've taught in the last years, do you see any changes in the student body in terms of types of students?

Well, I've only been teaching for six or seven or eight years and only at two institutions. In between here and Harvard there's not that much difference. Harvard is the better university, but in terms of general class position of students and money.

Maybe one big shift that is also being discussed is the shift toward the testing mentality away from students who are more independent or critical thinkers or interested in exploring things just for the sake of exploring things. There is a very sort of high pressure: Tell me what do I need to know, how do I get a good grade mentality. I guess it existed when I was in college, but I didn't think in these terms. Not as much as I sense these days.

Are there any other trends that you hear from your peers, maybe haven't experienced yourself?  
In changing kinds of students?

Yes.

I mean that's the one I sense the most. Someone who has been around longer, different generation, probably has a better sense. Warren and I are almost the same age, not sure. Maybe he has been teaching a little longer.

Many people tell me, from all kinds of institutions and range of experience, that they feel there's a growing sense of entitlement in students in terms of "We pay 40 grand a year and you're giving me an A- while I deserve an A+". You know, more toward a customer approach almost.

Now that you say that, that is something we talk about. It has to do with that sense of entitlement and payment. There's a shift in the culture that sees everything as something you can buy yourself, especially here. The other thing is that students want to consume education but almost as entertainment. There's an anti-intellectualism that shapes the way you teach because you're evaluated by students who evaluate you less on substance but more on presentation. So that when I was in college we would go in and sit and listen to lecture, like you do. You'd listen to a guy talking to you, take notes and maybe ask a question at the end or not. No picture, no bodily movement, but the mode of communication was to think and listen and process. But here, if you don't give a presentation without internet, music, some sort of visual stimulation you get treaded in your evaluations. Boring, incomprehensible. Even if you do PowerPoint and it's just texts and it's not aesthetically appealing, they criticize you in your evaluation.

So there's an entitlement notion but also an entertainment notion I think

Even here, that surprises me. I know that from teaching at XI.

Yes, that's a little different from Harvard. Still at Harvard you have the intellectual aura as such that the professors could at least – that was five or six years ago, we didn't have power point back then. But that's a difference and it's something we worry about.

That's something people worry about and publish also. A little jump for a second. What I want to assume, other than qualification and enculturation piece, is that university functions as much more than just a place where you study but a form of culture, a sense of community. In what areas do you experience the two universities constituting themselves as a community?

The institution or in my own feeling?

Both. Did you feel that somebody was trying to tie you in as faculty or XIII. men and women...?

That's certainly part of XIII.'s mode of speaking to faculty, students and staff, the language of community. And certainly for students they make a lot of efforts to cultivate that because that's how you cultivate emotional ties that create donors down the road. Create a positive student experience so that you can keep selling your institution.

As far as for faculty, I've always been in a liminal place in both places. I was a grad student on my way out at Harvard but I'm an assistant, untenured faculty not fully in here. So it's part of who you are but you're not sure if you'll get to stay there so you have this almost critical relationship that may change if I may be tenured. They may invest more in me and I may invest more in them. Sure they have events, workshops, cocktail hours for untenured faculty, but the culture of community is something that I wouldn't say I'm part of here yet.

Another area that is really interesting and you talked about this a little bit before, it's student population. I looked at student population in St. Louis. Not surprisingly, the African American population is 30%, city and county combined. No school reflects that number. My question is: What's your guess, your sense, your opinion that there's no university that has anywhere close to 30% African American population.

Well, even in forest part community college?

Leaving out community college.

Well, there's a number of reasons going into. I don't know where you'd even start. Well, it's not just diversity but poverty, basically. These universities exclude poor people as well as black folks, but certainly the exclusion historically is the response to dismal state of public schooling in the city. The fact that university, like XIII., is oriented toward a national public and its emphasis is no longer at the city itself. I think they have some initiative to encourage city students to apply but I don't know how energetic they are pursued. The structure of testing that's biased against minority students. The institutionalized racism, I mean, there are a million different factors. Plus there's been a sort of movement against affirmative action, so now at the graduate level they are making some advances in recruiting minority students. Now the language of affirmative action has been declared unconstitutional, so the grass that were directed toward minority students can no longer be directed in that way. So lots of factors, whether or not race can be taken into account at admission.

That was my starting point because at not university they tell you you can't study there cause you are black. But it seems to be the case.

But now, in the other direction, no longer can they admit people who are black if they are less qualified than someone else whereas in the past there was the possibility at the graduate level at least with grants that were targeted toward minority students. They've changed their names.

Well, I'm shopping for Ph.D.s and some universities have grants and scholarships you can only apply to if you are African American, Hispanic etc.

That might be the case but not here. They've changed it in the last two years. I was on the one for Latinos and one that was for African Americans and they had to change the language and the pool. Obviously they are still accepting Latinos and African Americans, but the pool is more about intercultural experience rather than your ethnic racial identity. I'm not sure how wide spread that is but that's what happens here.

So the institutionalized racism, structural poverty, dismal state of public schools, the bias of the testing system, all that works against minority students in higher education.

People in admissions said that they no longer have trouble to recruit minority students but keeping them is the challenge. The cultural divide between the students is so strong that whoever is not part of the club is in effect leaving in the first year.

That goes back to what I said before about university class credentialing people so the enculturation part can also be exclusionary, definitely.

That's very interesting. What ties in with that and that's my last question: I've read lots of publications of people being very proud of the U.S. having overcome a class system and therefore being a universal access system. If you are smart enough, work hard, you can make it. And if I play devil's advocate now, if you don't have the money, there are tons of loans out there. This discourse goes on and I was wondering what your opinion is.

Well, it works for some individuals but structurally it doesn't change the system. I studied because I got good grades and scholarships. I went to a nice, good private school that my parents didn't have to pay for so yes it works. I'm also a white male and that didn't hurt either. I never

faced any discrimination whatsoever. Probably go lots of privileged. And sure there's Barack Obama who made it too against lots of racism but that doesn't change the social and structural situation. The fact that a couple of individuals fall through.

And it's worse now because of the rising costs of education, the withdrawal of government and state from financing higher education and public education. So whatever the perception of that discourse arose out of the post WW boom where there was in effect a mass entrance in higher education but that reality is not longer there even if the discourse is still around. I mean it just doesn't apply. It's just a myth.

Do you have any opinion on not so much the loan system on itself but the effect of the loan system on students' choice of studies and success?

Well I think it's absolutely necessary. I fortunately didn't have to take out loans, but for some people it's the only possibility for studying. That's being cut back too. So how that effects their decisions, I don't know.

Well, look at our country, we are a debtor's nation. I mean my perception is that the doctors and lawyers are taking out loans because they know eventually they'll be making big money and be able to pay them back. If I thought I had to take out a loan, I probably wouldn't have studies Anthropology. I probably would have been more pressured to study something with some sort of business return to it. My brother joined the army because he didn't have any money. He gave his life, well figuratively, not literally...not yet anyway.

So I can't speak for the experience but does it matter? Yes, it matters.



**Dr. B. and Ms. DC.,**  
**Dean of Graduate Admission and Assistant for Graduate Admissions, Institution XII.**

What functions do you perform?

*I handle the enrollment management office. We process the applications that come in and then we get them out to the departments and communicate with applicants on the status. I also do the data management. I write lots of reports and crunch numbers.*

I am the academic dean of admissions. I am in charge of who is admitted, who isn't; work closely with the department when it comes to admissions, recommendations, decisions, probation. So my job is more academic as technical.

When you think of university as a community, do you participate in this community in any way other than your job description tells you to?

I do. I sit on campus wide boards: the international marketing board – marketing, recruiting international students so there are many schools represented. And then I sit on the public safety board for campus. My background is social services. I did trauma, crisis intervention work with corporations, hospitals, schools prior to coming to academia. So I am on the public safety board as one of the consultants. Then I do some interdisciplinary teaching. I teach in the school of medicine and the school of social work.

*I do serve on some university committees, but they are technical. We have a banner student information system here and I serve on the student corps committee which manages the student data and the integrity of that data. I also chair a recruitment and admissions subcommittee which is a group of all of the admissions offices on campus. It's basically all the other people that are doing the same thing we are doing. I am always in meetings, but these are the big ones.*

The graduate school encompasses 30 departments – excluding the school of business, school of law because they are professional programs – thus, we have the Ph.D. program in Business and Medicine as part of graduate school. But the MD and the law degree and the MBA are not. So being in the graduate school requires that we interact with the departments on many levels on different issues. From womb to tomb.

Can you briefly and very generally describe what the admissions process is?

A student can apply online or submit paper copies. Along with that they submit supporting documents which are reference letters or whatever the department and Gary work out. Once the applicant's file is complete we sent it to the department for review. The department then makes a recommendation to either admit or reject. It comes back to the graduate school. The file Gary reviews and he makes the final decision whether the applicant is accepted or rejected. Then, both department and applicant are informed about the decision.

What characterizes a successful applicant – aside from meeting standardized criteria?

A good fit between what the department's strengths are. So in Chemistry we have faculty who are very interested in hydrogen battery research, so applicants who have a similar background or interest would make a good fit with this faculty. So many fine students get rejected because their research and academic interest do not match the faculty. So other than your GPA, your electronic test scores, the very important criteria is whether it is a good fit with the strength and research of the department. Many applicants, unfortunately, are not prepped with that in their undergraduate programs. I can see fine students with fine GPAs and test scores and they call me because my

name is on the rejection letter. I tell them that looking at their professional goal statement, which is one of the most important documents in the application, I can tell that nobody has coached them, nobody has proofread it before they sent it in. It's either too general...so I always encourage applicants to familiarize themselves with the faculty in that department. That's critical. Graduate education in the U.S. is where you come to study under a particular faculty.

#### What would some red flags be?

Recommendation letters would be a great red flag. If a faculty recommendation would say: I really don't know this student, I only had him in one class and I can't say much about him or her. If they can't find three faculty members who think that they fly from trapezes then they're not going to get in a Ph.D. program. Secondly, when a writer of a letter says – this is the classic way of being political – 'With the proper environment and proper guidance and mentoring, she should do fine in the future.' That kind of language is a polite way of saying she is not ready for graduate school yet. Most professors are not that blunt when they write their recommendation letters. Then you have an opportunity to say that over the last ten years where would you rank this students out of all the students you have taught. If it's below 50% that's really bad. If it's not in the top 25%, it's bad for a Ph.D. program. That's a red flag.

This current form may encourage a person to write three sentences in here, so we'll eliminate that option. They have to attach an accompanying letter. Our faculty is disappointed when somebody only squeezes in a few comments. So we'll eliminate that space.

I would say not having a standardized form is the exception. It's pretty standard because universities want certain information. We have three questions and we want them answered by the writer.

#### When we talk about the admissions process, I understand that XII. is Catholic. What role does religious affiliation play in the admissions?

Minimal. We are a Jesuit university which distinguishes us somewhat from a Catholic university in the sense that we have an international religious perspective. We want and value diversity and so what we're looking at is our 500 year tradition of education throughout the world. We emphasize that and within the Catholic culture, so most of our graduate programs – including theology - want religious diversity in the classroom. For, the hard sciences – our biological sciences - it's not an issue, although there is a perception among some applicants in the biomedical sciences that their research may be inhibited by Catholic theology around stem cell research, embryo research. The experience does not make that a true statement. So I would say that being a Catholic university we consider a strength because we use that in the richest definition of Catholic which is universal. We really value diversity, cultural and religious. We don't hide it and we don't flawn it. Catholic universities address this issue very different. Notre Dame University is our lady's school and they are very Catholic. Their approach is very different than the Jesuit tradition. Our opening school day prayer service is ecumenical: we have a Hindu prayer dance, a Rabbi calling us to prayer, the Muslims reading from the Book of Koran. We believe that the Catholics have the best tradition of educating the planet.

#### Are applicants interviewed? Face to face?

Yes. All of our Ph.D. students get a telephone interview, minimally. Most of them, however, require a face to face. It's an exception if that doesn't happen. Our international students are required to do a telephone interview as well.

Do you have any policy with regard ethnic minorities?

Policy in what sense?

Policy in the sense of any outspoken rule to having a certain percentage of ethnic minorities?

[shakes his head] We promote diversity and that's why we have diversity fellowships. That diversity could be age, race, nationality, gender. In some of our professional programs – nursing, occupational therapy, speech pathology – a male would be considered a diversity applicant. It's whatever diversifies these group of Ph.D. students. Could be age: You have all 23 year olds and someone applies who is 50 with a strong business background. Then he diversifies this Ph.D. cohort. We define diversity by department and definitely not by race.

Why do you think people enroll in graduate programs in general?

I think the economy. The job market is the first criterion that dictates whether people go on. If people's career does not demand for their education, most people will not pursue it because of the time and the cost in the U.S.. So the job market, the economy, definitely drives graduate education. For undergrad, I think it drives where they go. For the graduate, it drives what they're going to study. So the very first reason is the job market. The second is people who want – like yourself – to be teachers. They want to teach in their profession. Anyone who wants to be an educator has to go on to get a graduate degree in their field. And then I think another factor is scholarship. Some people love learning, creating new knowledge, research, academia. I see a large number of people who want to teach in their profession. They worked in their profession and then they want to teach. That's my story. I worked 15 to 20 years in it and then wanted to teach.

What changes, if any, have you experienced in the student body in the last years? Do you feel that a different type of person is going to graduate school today than ten etc. years ago?

This is generalities. I think there is a much higher awareness of being a customer today than it was 15 years or a generation ago. 'I am a customer and I pay for a service and a product. I am a shopper and I expect quality for what I am paying for.' The typical graduate student has a set of expectations that a generation ago graduate students didn't have. They know that it's competitive now. People in my generation went where their uncle went or within 50 miles of their home town. It is the whole thing of being a customer and shopping around and therefore having different quality expectations.

*I think from the application processing aspect, the expectations are higher as far as how to submit their application. They want to do it all online, check the status online, everything needs to be now, 24/7.*

Thirdly, a huge difference is the adult learner. In my generation returning to school at age 40 was unheard of – it just didn't exist, very few exceptions. Now with downsizing of corporations, people have to retrain and re-skill. Manufacturing – I think that is the main reason - has left the U.S., there are very few high school or college level jobs. There are so many careers that are being terminated, so people have not option but reeducate. I think graduate education has to be sensitive to the job market which is demanding people to be retrained. XII. is still a very traditional graduate school and we're beginning now to respond to the job market – to the 38 to 45 year old who says that their B.A. is not longer marketable. They need a grad degree now

rather than a second bachelor's. That's a huge difference because of our loss of jobs that people were educated for but are useless. So the adult learner is a new type of applicant we are seeing.

You spoke about the job market. In that realm of utility, what in your opinion is the purpose of higher education in general?

The primary purpose is to have an educated population and informed citizenry. I am a John Dewey. Democracy and a republic will not function without an educated population. Without that, dictatorships and all kinds of government control over people will happen. The second goal is the American dream where you can have enough money to buy a home, travel, buy a second TV. Education provides you a level of life that without it, you'll just be living from hand to mouth. It increases opportunities and a more comfortable life.

*It allows you to have challenging work as well where you are not the guy who's repeatedly screwing the same thing.*

Responsibilities, challenges, fulfilling work, meaningful work that has an impact on other people's lives.

The author of the book that I'm basing my historical overview on is writing about the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Then there was this whole movement away from research universities and ivory tower, the search for truth toward the idea of funding university and therefore having to have undergraduate levels. He in his book said 'With culture as an end, university has no business.' If we are trying to maintain the culture we are living in then university will not be able to do that, because university should be research based, searching for truth. We should not be concerned with the job market or money etc.

I think that cloistered approach to education – the scriptorium - has its place and value where somebody is engaged in a 12<sup>th</sup> century manuscript – and will that improve the life of the poor and will that help with health insurance for everybody in the U.S.. I think there is a valid place in the U.S. for the scriptorium where somebody just engages in esoteric research. Einstein said truth, beauty and goodness enriches a society, so we need people who are artists and who spend their whole life studying this 12<sup>th</sup> century manuscript because it enriches the human experience and the human spirit. But the practicality, the utilitarian aspect of education has to balance that. To me it's not binary, it's not either or. I think graduate education has a place for both. The utilitarian: I am doing what I can, working my butt off, working 40 hours a week and going to school at night because it's going to get me the job I want and a higher income with more responsibilities. That is a very valid reason to go back to school and I think universities I think need to respond to both. I view all the dissertation defenses and I go to a lot of them because I am fascinated that someone would spend five years of their life studying this esoteric topic. I just want to hear what they have to say about it after spending five years of their life studying a line of Thomas Aquinas' work. I think those kind of people are artists. It's like people spending the same amount of time learning how to do a particular ballet dance. I think we need good engineers and ballet dancers. If society loses one or the other – you can look at Mao's China where all their history was destroyed in order to be a very utilitarian society. Look at the consequences of that. I just see it's a both and answer not an either or. If it's just a utilitarian answer then we lose the beauty and enjoyment of life. A little opera, a little Mozart now and then.

When we go back to that general sense of university in all its shapes and forms: In what areas does university constitute itself as a community?

It's a very good question. I believe in the U.S. model – and it has changed rapidly in a generation – we were an ivory tower a generation ago. Today the emphasis is on seamless borders with out neighbors. That we exist to make a difference in the whole neighborhood in the city. It's no accident that our President was awarded Citizen of the Year for the city of St. Louis, because he has permeated our boundaries. If you visited here ten years ago, we were an enclave surrounded by extreme poverty. Maybe not south, but definitely east and north. So we have created a culture at XII. to be conscious of our role as responsible citizens. We are a community distinct from our neighbors; we don't look like our immediate neighbors. I teach undergraduate nurses in service learning where the students are in the community and bring that to the classroom – and vice versa. I think we build community in the graduate education in the departmental level – and unfortunately there is not enough dialogue but that is changing – like the college of education, public service are all geographically being housed together which is a brand new thing. So that public policy and education Ph.D. students are talking to each other, researching and writing grants together. Ten years ago that wasn't encouraged. So creating communities that are more seamless and fluid is definitely a goal here at XII. within our campus culture. Creating interdisciplinary, inter-active communities within the academic communities; and creating bridges with the communities around us. With our Catholic tradition, we use the language and operationalize community. It's a big thing here at XII., it's big.

*Our slogan is 'Women and Men for Others', I forget the beginning part of that.*

Community building is definitely big here at XII. and I think it's one of the marketing distinctions with a big state university. You will know your professors and fellow students, you will have campus community. It's a big fuzzy think here. Whether it's a lived reality...it's very much so in undergraduate. Our graduate students: more of a European model.

How do you feel about a national identity of higher education? Do you think it exists?

I think so, very much so. I think – and this is a political statement so take it as such – the past seven years has tried to damage that national identity. That people in higher ed are not in touch with the common person at the bar or at Walmart and it's come down to reality. How politically the attempt to destroy the scientific reputation of global research...I think there is definitely a culture that is being threatened in the U.S. by “The guy sitting in the bar knows as much about global warming as the Ph.D. physics professors do.” What we breathe in here in the U.S. is that we want people with dirt underneath their fingers running our country, we want the common...so you have the ridiculous thing of our presidential candidates like Obama serving burgers in Union, MO. Seriously! I mean that's the absurdity it has amounted to because wisdom and knowledge and the guts of America is build around the good old boy, uneducated who comes up behind the prime minister of Germany and gives them a back rub. It really saddens me because it discourages a lot of people from treating their high school education seriously. They don't take it as seriously as in Europe. That being educated is...it's not snobbery...it's being out of touch with reality. So when students write in their papers: “...but in the real world” – this is the real world! The media and politics is trying to make us not a part of the real world and that's a huge mistake. If our public policy is not based on science, it is going to be based on religious myths and religious fantasies and we need to base our foreign policy and public policy, housing, healthcare – that needs to be based on science and data. Where does that get generated? In the academy. And to put down the academy to be out of touch with American life is the biggest

threat to our democracy. And I think this last seven years has done so much damage to having an educated populous. I know so many...the big threat in poverty stricken areas is: if you get educated you are buying into the system. There is that pressure. To talk intelligent, to think intelligent is being a nerd. And all the derogatory language around someone who is smart and studies every night is "you are not part of the American culture if you study hard, you know chemistry and Latin and Greek". That used to be held up and admired and looked up upon. To be valedictorian used to be the greatest achievement. It's not anymore. I see it in my nephews and nieces who are in high school right now. It saddens and bothers immensely because the ramifications are obvious. The way people vote. Like I said I am John Dewey through and through. An educated population is at the source of democracy and if we don't educate in the arts and music, humanities and science, we'll lose our democracy within 50 years. We will not be a democracy anymore.

As a follow up question: I've identified some key texts and some of them claim that the American system is an all access system in the sense that everyone who wants to do it can do it. Would you agree?

Totally disagree. Totally. The front page of the Post Dispatch says that MISSOU has 500 more students than last year – we have 100 less than what we budgeted for. And one of the two interviewees on the front page says "My two final choices were MISSOU and XII. and I chose MISSOU because I can't afford XII.". The community college, the two year colleges, is bursting at the seams because people can't afford four years at the XIV. anymore. The whole loan program is collapsing. A big loan bank who subsidized 30% of student loans in the U.S. went under Wednesday or Tuesday, so getting a loan, much less grants and pell grants, is just...education is becoming elitist which is another threat to democracy because the typical person can't afford it.

*That is actually what I wanted to follow up on the national identity with, I think it's the institution and the cost that defines the university and makes people not want to go. People can't afford it. It's rising 6% every year and then you hear on the media that it is 40,000 dollars for a semester or year, the guy who has the dirt under his fingernails doesn't even earn that in a year. It's unrealistic.*

Thus he is going to sneer at it. That's a very good point, very good point. We do not have equal access to education. It's not open to people who work for 8 dollars an hour. They can't come to XII., there's no way. You cannot afford it. It's not accessible to everybody, not public and especially not private.

What I found is that the largest minority in St. Louis are African Americans and they constitute 30%, city and county combined. I looked at the statistics and I can't find any university in the area reflecting this amount of the minority. How come that a minority that constitutes almost 40 percent is not at all reflected in that amount in the higher education system. Maybe that's a question that seems apparent to everyone who lives within this culture.

I am not a political scientist but I am a social worker. I think it's two factors that jump up to me. The majority of those 30% attend public schools in the city. The rate of graduation of our public schools is 50%. It's very high. Maybe 6 out of ten, but I think half the student body doesn't even graduate. So that's the number one reason why you don't see them in the college: the majority of African Americans are in the public school system in the city. And if they get a GED they are very limited in what schools accept them, because they don't test well, remedial work etc. Number two reason: unfortunately, there is "acting white" if you get educated. There is

significant peer pressure in the lower class African American public schools. I talk to teachers there and any student who studies and tries can easily become isolated and disadvantaged. Also the question of “Who do I belong to?” and “Who do I identify with?”. My culture that I grew up with and live in. If I become a scholar will I be welcomed in that community. There is no assurance or perhaps not that experience. Our statistics are not good in retaining minorities. We bring them in freshmen year but unfortunately by their sophomore year they transfer. We are not as good as we need to be in creating a welcoming community that will help them create a new identity with us. Because they are leaving a community that doesn’t value – that’s gross generality, but they need to form a new identity and we don’t help them adequately identify with us. We are conscious with that and we are really trying to work on that, but being on that international committee, that issue comes up all the time. We bring students in from Mexico, Puerto Rico, Brazil and by their second year they are transferring to a different school. Our campus does not look like America.

Well yeah, but whose does?

I think someone like University of California Davis, that university really looks like America.

Research and publications seem to be divided on whether admissions testing reflects academic success later on. What I read says that there is no correlation. Yesterday, the person at XV. explained to me that it was the other way round. What is your opinion or expertise in this regard? In ‘98 or ‘99 our Dean lead a research team to look at that question. Do GRE predict success and graduation in graduate school. The literature is mixed. It depends on your statistical analysis. There are so many variables that influence graduation: Did she get pregnant? Did her husband move to Florida and she had to go with him? etc. That is what the literature says. There are so many variables that will determine why people leave. Many students, because of financial situations of their parents, have to quit and take care of their parents. The literature does indicate that GREs do predict success in completing especially doctoral degrees. People who do finish do have high GRE scores. Very few people with low GRE scores actually finish. People with high GRE scores don’t finish, but it’s not because they can’t do it academically. So I believe what the GRE is looking for is a good predictor if you finish your Ph.D.. There is not much in there for chemistry, but for education, humanities, social sciences it does give you a variable to predict success. They are not totally useless. I talk to my peers all throughout the U.S. and I know that some universities have an A pile and a B pile. All GRE scores below 700 go in one and all above in the other and A pile gets precedent. Then they go to the statement and the letters and if they can’t find their cohort, then they go to the B pile. We don’t do that at XII.. We look at the whole package. The electronic exams are one variable amongst many. For some universities it is the variable. It separates the As from the Bs and they only go to the Bs if they don’t find their people in their As. I know that’s the practice in some universities from interaction with my peers. I know it is not the practice here because I see every file. Some people can have much lower GRE scores, but their GPA, their goal statements, their recommendations are exactly what they are looking for. The variable is significant, but not overwriting everything else.

Some people claim that the U.S. on a whole has accomplished what probably no other country has which is getting rid of the class system. People are not identified by class but by characters, their goals in life and so on. Would you agree, disagree, what is your take?

*I would completely disagree. It is what we were saying earlier about the haves and the haves not. You get in this country what you can pay for.*

You don't get respect. People need to go live and study rural America. It's all white – depending on what state. Illinois rural is almost all white and I come from that. Huge class system. I think it's less and less about race. I think the typical suburban in Missouri, Arnold would have no problem with the middle class Black, Asian, Hispanic family next door. If they worked, cut their grass and took care of their kids. It makes no difference what color your skin is. Typically, I am speaking generalities. But class is huge here in the U.S.. People don't want to live next to somebody who is poor. They don't. That's why the new housing developments in St. Louis are not going to work, because it's mixed housing. It's a 100,000 dollar condo next to a 500,000 dollar condo. It doesn't work in the U.S..

*Because the 500,000 dollar guy feels like it's bringing her property value down.*

Exactly. It's definitely a class system. We have not accomplished that. With Obama as a candidate, I think we have done immense strides in racism in this country since the Jim Crow laws in the 50s and 60s. Huge success!

*I mean in Europe that was unthinkable. Nobody thought Obama could take the candidacy.*

Exactly. The people didn't think it. They were all voting for Hillary until they saw this guy has a chance. Yeah, classism is huge in urban areas and it's so obvious in rural areas. We use white trailer trash and husher. Uneducated, white, rural...

*...toilet in the front yard.*

No we have not achieved that. XII. campus is a huge sign of it. I teach freshmen and my lower middle class students who are here on huge scholarships, feel very alienated. My students have to write a paper every class and by the tenth paper they start trusting me because of my feedback. Consistently they feel alienated here at XII..

Because everybody was able to pay and they are only here on a scholarship?

Their classmates have their own car in the garage.

*They think they can't keep up. The other kids go out to do x, y and z and they don't have the money.*

They go out for dinner Friday nights and this student doesn't have 10 dollars for that dinner. They go on weekend trips to Chicago and they can't afford it. They slowly get ostracized because they don't have their own TV in their rooms, don't have their own car, money for dinner or trips. They have jobs and their classmates come with a U haul, their own car and a credit card from mom and dad. Classism is very pronounced on this campus.

That is very interesting. I've actually considered redoing my thesis statement and focusing on the class issue.

*I think if you do that you should look at the tax base of where those 30% are coming from.*

She is making a very good point. Unlike Europe, our education system is funded on property tax for that district. So if your property value is 50 000 or 500 000 – do the numbers. The kids in a district where the average home is 300 000 dollars, think of the money that you have to hire the best teachers, best equipment...

*...people wanna work at your school...*

...and the athletic program! You can hire coaches and equipment. I talked to an African American freshmen just last week and he is so excited that he is coming here. So I said: Where are you from? He says he's from the north side. He goes "Oh my mom, on her way to her ten



dollar an hour job, dropped me off at Kirkwood every morning. She made sure I studied, did my homework and I wouldn't be here today if I went to school where I came from.

*What would be ideal is everything going into one pot and then every district gets the same.*

Well from experience I can say that it is probably still not going to work because in Vienna we have that. We are progressing to a point where we have clusters and we have – we call them ghettos. In German, it doesn't have the connotation it has in English. It simply means...  
...homogeneous, it means homogeneous.

...geographically. In Vienna, that is a big issue right now. Unfortunately, people who I don't hold very highly say that the solution is to tax people and then use that to fund schools.  
How many of them are Turks?

Turks? We don't have minorities represented in our politics.  
Not yet? Germany is struggling with that whole phenomenon.

Austria is doing horrible in that area, horrible.

See, Europe had the luxury of having homogeneous societies until the curtain fell and now you've got the eastern Germans ruining your culture. And then there's Sweden...

Right, but the northern nations were never immigrant nations. You have to consider that in Sweden or Norway, every student in the high school system has a legally protected right to be instructed in their native language. Imagine that! That is completely unthinkable where I come from.

It's impossible here.

It is. Who is going to pay for that? If you are a politician and you suggest that, you are going.

Well, we are becoming a bilingual country. And the Mexicans say we are just regaining what was taken from us 400 years ago.

*Right now we are being charged by iPeds which is the data collection that XII. reports to to change the way we ask the race-ethnicity question. It's a two part question where we first ask if you are Hispanic or Latino. If you say yes to that, we don't need to identify any other races. But if you do you may multi pick any others you belong to. I don't know what they are going to do with this data.*

That is why our language here at XII. is not centered around race. My sister in law for example is full blooded Pilipino and we are full blooded German. Are the children then pacific Asian or Caucasian European? Which box do they check? I identify much more Germanic than I do U.S. citizen. Borders can change but Germanic doesn't.

*It's a melting pot.*

**Ms. D., .Head of Graduate Admissions, Institution XV.**

What are your functions?

I oversee graduate admissions and pretty much the entire graduate department. We have five advisors that work for us right in this area and then we have two additional ones at the extension campuses. I oversee all their functions. When students have issues – their GPA is not high enough, they can't get a hold of their advisor and need to schedule classes – generally it ends up on my desk. We laughingly say it's the complaint department. I don't mind that at all, because I don't want it to go any higher.

I oversee all the grads that come in. With my two assistants we make sure that all the paperwork is in. I do a lot of work on databases, our online applications...really I just oversee everything.

Are these activities in your job description?

Yes, they would be. My job description is to make sure that students are served and that things run smoothly.

How much of the time you spend here do you spend performing your job and activities of the institution?

Yes, we all help and step in, but it's only once a year. Pretty much I do is focused on the graduate department.

Can you briefly describe the admissions process?

We are one of the colleges that does not use testing scores for people to come into our grad program. We have grad programs in counseling, educational administration, classroom teaching with initial certification and the M.A. programs continuing, MBA, Masters of Arts and Christian Ministry, and M.A. of Science and Education Sport Management. So within each of those, there are qualifications that students have to meet. We take all the applications; make sure they meet the qualifications. They must submit a letter of recommendation, a professional statement that they write – a two page essay just explaining what their background is, their goals, why they are pursuing their education here. We monitor and review that, we get transcripts from any place they have ever taken class, but we do not require test scores. Part of the reason that we don't is that studies have shown that they are not valid. I personally am a student in a graduate program, because I was a stay at home mom for 20 years, got this job and thought I really need my Master's. As a non-traditional student, I would have done terribly on the GRE – I'm sure of it. Yet I'm being very successful in my graduate work, because I am very committed as a student. So we have a lot of non-traditional, older students, people who've been out for a while but have hands-on experience and who are successful students, but they wouldn't test well. Also, research shows that test really don't measure what they say they measure.

Even on the undergraduate side there is a trend to move away from the ACT and SAT and look more at what students do in school and their GPAs. It makes a lot of sense. The one thing we do is we require a minimum GPA of 2.75. We will admit students at a 2.5 on probation, given that everything else looks good and they can give us a reason why they had trouble in undergrad. They have 12 hrs in which they must maintain a 3.0 GPA, so it gives them a second chance. Many people had a great time in undergrad, they grow up and get a job and come back. Five years later they are serious students and if we only base it on undergrad, they will never get in.

What characterizes a successful applicant?

We have a fairly open admission policy because we are a new graduate school – we have only been offering graduate programs since 2000. So we are more lenient on what we require because we are building a program and we find so many students who come back after they've been out who are much more serious about their education. Because we are a faith based institution, we lean more towards mercy and we allow them to come in, but they must maintain the 3.0 during their graduate studies and to graduate. So a successful candidate – really, we will consider every person.

Is there any such thing as red flags?

Low GPA, any type of criminal record – if they've been convicted of a crime, but it doesn't always keep them out. For instance, I had someone who put that he'd not been convicted, but when we ran his certification it flagged that he had been convicted. So when I called him I probably sounded like his mom, because I told him to never ever lie on an application, because it's going to come back and haunt you. We can work with the truth, we really can. We can't work with when you lie to us and we find out, that will knock you out of the program. Well, he had a DWI when he was in college in Arizona and he really didn't feel like that was important, so we allowed him to continue in the program. On the other hand, we have had people who have come to us with certain kinds of crimes that we've turned away.

What role does religious affiliation play in the admissions process?

None whatsoever. Only in the minister program, we welcome in everyone from an evangelical Christian faith. We would probably welcome in anyone from any faith, but I think they'd be very uncomfortable and I would question why they would pursue that degree in the amount of time. It is a very difficult degree, very theological, almost like a seminary degree. But other than that we've had many Jewish students, Hindus, Muslim students – that's not the majority. Realistically, our demographics are not heavily weight to our Baptist students.

Are applicant interviewed at some point?

They are not, unless we have a specific reason and we want to give them that opportunity. But not routinely.

This is a summary for the schools in this area and it shows – for any of the schools – that the minorities, especially the biggest in St. Louis, the African American Community, are not represented in the student population.

There are a couple of problems with this. One is that this number right here includes an excel high school program, so we have about 1800 students here. I am wondering if this may be undergrad, because in the graduate school I know that our number of African Americans is much much higher than that. We do not have a policy that we have to have this many people of any color, nationality, race...we don't have a policy like that, we don't discriminate, we don't even know. We do ask it on the application for reporting purposes to the government. [picks up phone]

You are actually right: this is undergrad.

Right, the undergrad enrollment right here also includes the excel program which is about 1800 students. Our enrollment is about 1600 with our graduate being about 1200, so these numbers in my mind can be misleading.

When we look at university as an educational institution as a whole, why do you think it is that people enroll in a graduate program?

I think it helps them achieve a goal, either a lifetime goal or to better their own life. Many of our students are teachers and they will enroll in a graduate program to stay current, to go up on the pay schedule, but I think it's really a personal satisfaction. It's not easy and it's not cheap, so if you don't have a personal motivation you're not likely to stay in it.

What changes, if any, have you experienced in the student body over the last years, in terms of who applies?

Not so much in people that apply. I think we are tightening our standards as a university to those that we accept into the programs. Because we are growing we are in a position to be a bit picky. So I think we are seeing – I don't want to say a higher class or better quality student – but a more serious student. Someone who really becomes because it is something they really want to do, not just because they just got their undergrad.

What do you think is the purpose of a – any - graduate degree?

Again, personal satisfaction for the individual but many places also require it. They require higher education; the market place is far more competitive. Years ago, a college education in undergrad was something that was special. Everybody graduated high school, so that was the first step. Now, almost everybody goes to college, or that seems to be the norm more than it's not. So a graduate degree gives you a step up. So I think it's to be competitive.

I have a statement by Veysey, 'With culture as an end, university has not business'.

I'm not sure I really understand what his point is.

What I want to introduce are two functions: enculturation and qualification. Graduate studies, I think, would clearly be on the qualification end.

Oh yes.

Undergraduate degrees, and I don't know if you agree, would be found on the enculturation end.

Yes, absolutely.

And now he says if the end of higher education is culture, then it's not going to work.

If that is the goal, I'm not sure it'll work. If that's the goal. But I'm not so sure it is the goal. I would have to dig in and research it, look at the context to really have a good idea to where I would stand on that.

When you look at university as a community, what are the areas where university constitutes itself as a community?

How so, you mean the student body?

What are procedures, measures, events that are meant to bring people together?

I think at the graduate level you don't have that nearly as much as in the undergrad level. And even for us, we are a huge commuter campus, so it's not like some schools where there are lots of students on campus with activities, sororities, fraternities etc. We do offer a lot to students. I don't know how many take advantage of that, because I don't do undergrad. Most of our grad students are working full time, have families, so for them there are concerts and things like that. What really happens is during class time and in class, individual classes will gel and they'll move together through the program. They begin to know each other and so they form some really solid relationships, but you don't see a crossover between students of different programs, because there is not a lot of crossover.

How would you characterize your university's identity?

How we are perceived?

How you want to be perceived, probably more than how you are perceived.

I think now that we are getting our name out there, people are becoming aware of us. For a long time we were this tiny college out here and nobody knew about us. With XV., everybody associated the hospital – and still many people do that. But I think that we are emerging as a real competitor with schools in our area that are our size, offering the same programs. We happen to have some of the most outstanding staff members and faculty. It's our mission to have faculty who have been in the field, who have hands-on experience so that they are not just teaching theory. They are teaching what really goes on out there. We have two retired superintendents who are retired and teach for us in the Educational Administration Specialist Program. I've done surveys to see what students' impressions are. Hands down, they think that these men are wonderful. They don't give them busy work, but practical experience that works every day. They have been in situations where intruders have come into their building or a snowstorm starts after school starts. All those real life things that the book might give you an idea of but it's not what happens in real life. So I think we pride ourselves on that faculty that can present that.

...I don't see these 30% black students represented in any college here. Since America is a society that is not supposed to pay attention to class, I wonder how that is possible.

It is and I think that there are so many variables that go in it. We offer classes in the inner city and we sponsor charter schools, so we are involved in that and cultural diversity is something very important to our school. We don't want to be known as a Baptist school. We stand for certain principles and there is no shaking those. However, we do offer classes in the inner city to address students' issues who can't get out here. But I think the issue is so much greater, especially when you look at universities. When you look at St. Louis city, they're just now starting to build condos and places for people to live. There has been not affordable housing other than the projects; there has been no place for people to grocery shop. The only reason I know that is because my husband works there. It's his passion and he revitalizes the city. The school system in St. Louis – the public schools – is in horrific shape. They are very broken. Until the schools are good, you will not have an influx of people come in and live there, so you're not going to get a good mix and balance of people. So the whole thing is much greater than our school. If you look at your inner city schools, you probably have – and I'm just throwing that out there, I have no knowledge – but African American children are not getting a quality education. That's why charter schools are popping up all over. Those kids are not getting an education. The cycle of poverty perpetuates itself. They are not going to universities, so the cycle perpetuates. I

don't know if that has as much to do with race as with politics. If you have 98% white, Asian or any other nationality, we would still have the same issues. My children went to a school that was racially diverse, but it was out in West County. They got an education and so did the African American students that went with them. So I think it has so much more to do with a socio-economical basis, a political basis – then you can really look at the schools. They are only a byproduct of a different system that is broken. That is just my personal opinion.

In this same line of thought: There are lots of articles claiming that America provides a mass educational system that is all access. Would you agree to a statement that America has an all access system?

So that anyone who wants to go to school can?

Yes.

I think to a degree that's true. Mizzou (public university) for example admits almost everyone. We also have junior colleges where students can get an associates degree. For students struggling in high school that is an excellent stepping stone, but I do feel like it's pretty much open who wants it and who is willing to work toward it. It can get very expensive when you come to the university level, but you do have the junior colleges and the state schools that are achievable for anyone who really values and education and wants it.

What is your take on the loan system that exists. This loan system is something very foreign to me and I'm trying to understand what that means to people.

Part of that is because the cost is so high but people have a perception that they must go to college to be successful. For instance, I have four children in college. If I couldn't have put them through college, I would have counseled them to start a junior college for 83 dollars a credit hour. We would have done that for two years, got associates. If they are good students, they can get help for two years and then only pay for two years. I think there are lots of ways to do it. Unfortunately, I think an awful lot of people take out loans with the right intent – to have their education. But they have to remember that those loans have to be paid back and they get themselves into a lot of trouble. I don't know if the other system works better because I've never been exposed to it. I think having to pay for something makes it very dear to you, but on the other hand it has gotten so easy to get college loans and don't believe that the average 18 year old who comes out of high school and takes out 40 or 50 000 Dollars in loans has any clue what they are doing.

And for graduate students the ceiling is over 100 000 that they can borrow. But again that is a personal attribute. My personal opinion is pay as you go. But there are so many people with credit cards. The companies started sending my children credit cards when they turned sixteen and I would just shred them. No 16 year old needs a credit card. But we are a credit society and that mentality permeates a lot of what we do. It is mindboggling too. I could not live that way.

Is there any chance for a research or teaching assistantships – any type of work to pay for the degree if you don't want to take out a loan or have the means to pay.

There is for our athletes. A lot of our coaches will be assistant coaches and work with students. I don't know if it's full or half compensation. We don't have graduate assistants and mostly that is because our program is not that big. Part of the reason we don't utilize them is because we are small and we really want that teacher interaction. Our class sizes are very small. You will never

be in a class with 50 people, 40 maybe once. Most of them are 10 to 15 and that's pretty individualized instruction which is outstanding. For those who work here full time, they can receive tuition if they want to pursue an undergraduate degree. So if someone really wanted a degree and couldn't, they could get a job at a university and after a certain period of time – for us it's a year and for WashU I think it's 5 years – they could then pursue their degree. So there are ways to do it if you are willing to put a little work into it.

## **Abstract**

Die vorliegende Diplomarbeit beschäftigt sich mit dem Konzept des freien Hochschulzuganges in den Vereinigten Staaten und zeigt anhand der Fallstudie von St. Louis, Missouri, auf, in welchen geschichtlichen, gesellschaftlichen und kulturellen Entwicklungen die Idee des „universal access“ verankert ist.

Der amerikanische Traum von der uneingeschränkten Erreichbarkeit gesetzter Ziele ist die kulturelle Basis, auf der der freie Hochschulzugang argumentiert wird. Dieser Glaube an absolute Chancengleichheit durch harte Arbeit ist eine zentrale Figur der amerikanischen Gesellschaft, wird aber leider durch die Realität unterwandert und ist heute nicht viel mehr als ein Mythos, der im besten Falle noch für die wohlhabenden Teile der Gesellschaft Gültigkeit hat.

Durch die interdisziplinären Perspektiven kann festgehalten werden, dass die Hochschulzugang in den U.S.A. nicht frei ist, insofern er als erreichbar für alle gedacht wird. Die soziale Herkunft der Menschen und ihre Bildungsgeschichte spielen eine maßgebliche Rolle. Standardisierte Aufnahmeverfahren, die diese sozialen Determinanten angeblich filtern, erhalten das System sozio-ökonomischer Diskriminierung am Laufen, indem sie potentiellen Studenten und Studentinnen eine organisatorische Kompetenz abverlangen, die ohne wissende Unterstützung, Zeit und sehr viel Eigeninitiative nicht zu erbringen ist.

Die genannten Probleme sind nicht durch weitere Verordnungen zur Gleichstellung zu erreichen, da sie eines kulturellen Umdenkens an den Wurzeln der US amerikanischen Gesellschaft und ihrer Diskurse benötigt. Das Bildungssystem ist wie jedes andere tiefgreifend kulturell Verwurzelt und muss daher schon in der Ausbildung der Kinder und Jugendlichen ansetzen, um die Diskriminierung im Hochschulsektor in Zukunft zu vermeiden.



# Curriculum Vitae

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## **EDUCATION**

December 2009      **Master's degree in Teaching - English, Psychology, Philosophy**  
University of Vienna, Austria

## **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

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Fall 2007      **Manuscript Editing: "Prisoner of War"**  
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2007 -      **English Instructor**  
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2006/07      **Graduate Teaching Assistant**  
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## **RESEARCH EXPERIENCE**

**Thesis:** "With liberty and justice for all..." – Systemic issues in US Higher Education"

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## **PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS**

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## FORSCHUNGSERFAHRUNG

**Diplomarbeit:** “‘With liberty and justice for all...’ – Systemic issues in US Higher Education”

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